THE

Mischief of Persecution

EXEMPLIFIED;

BY A

TRUE NARRATIVE

OF THE

Life and Deplorable End

OF

Mr. John Child,

WHO

Miserably destroy'd himself, *Octob.* 13. 1684.

GIVING

An Account of his Despair; And divers Conferences had with him, by several of his Friends.

TOGETHER

With his ANSWER and PAPERS;

Written by his Own Hand.

ALSO

A DISCOURSE *of the Nature and Office of* CONSCIENCE.

With a *POSTSCRIPT*, shewing, The Reason of its Publication at this Time.

Attested by us, *THO. PLANT. BENJ. DENNIS.*

May 7. 1688. This may be Printed, *C. N.*

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UMI

TO THE READER.

THAT which hath prevailed with us to publiſh this Treatiſe, is, that we might give thoſe many who have deſired it, and all that ſhall vouchſafe to read it, an impartial Account of what hath come to our knowledge concerning the Dreadful Horror of Conſcience, and Deplorable End of Mr. John Child: In his Youthful days, a zealous Profeſſor of Religion; in his Riper years, a Backſlider from God, under pretence of Change of his Opinion: A Neglecter of Publick Worſhip, not only in the way he had formerly profeſt, but in that alſo which of late years, in his Diſcourſes and Arguments, he preferred before the other.

Under the ſpecious ſhew of promoting a more full and firm Union amongſt all good Proteſtants; a great Calumniator of his Brethren, publickly charging many of them in general, as guilty of ſuch Crimes and Blaſphemies, as his own Knowledge and Dictates of Conſcience, at the ſeaſon when he did it, could and did teſtifie they were clear of.

What prompted him hereunto, (beſides the Hypocriſie, Pride, and Malice of his own heart) we certainly know not; but have ſome ground to ſuſpect, when he was about this evil work which cauſed his downfal, he converſed with ſome perſons, who rather promoted than cautioned him againſt it.

Under his Temptation, we fear, he did not conſider that anciently-approved, uſeful, and neceſſary Caution, which the Apoſtle

mentions, Be not deceived, evil communication corrupts good manners.

After he was once throughly awakened with the ſence of his Sin, he fell under thoſe Horrours of Conſcience, which have not been paralleld in any other that we have heard of, ſince the Caſe of Francis Spira, *being ſo dreadful, permanent, and prevalent over him, as to reſiſt all Friendly Endeavours uſed to appeaſe his grief; which after ſeveral months abiding in the higheſt extremity, at length tempted and prevailed with him, by his own hands to end his miſerable Life.*

Upon this occaſion we have alſo given ſome brief Hints of the Nature and Office of Conſcience, and the Obligations we are under to it. All which we recommend to the Readers ſerious conſideration, with our fervent Prayers to God, that what we have herein done, may ſucceed to his and our own Souls advantage, and peace of Conſcience, both here and hereafter.

It may be in many reſpects uſeful to take notice that the Pamphlet which was Written and Publiſhed by Mr. John Child, *and which, with reſpect to the bitter Reflections and Calumnies therein caſt upon his Brethren, did afterwards fill him with ſo great Horrour of Soul, as to deſtroy himſelf, bare the Title of as charitable an Argument, as could be undertaken by the beſt of Chriſtians.*

For a more full and firm Union amongſt all good Proteſtants.

But though in this Title his Words were (as the Pſalmiſt
Pſal. 55. 21. *ſpeaks)* ſofter than oyl, yet were they drawn ſwords. *He put forth his hand againſt ſuch as were at peace with him; his Equals, his Acquaintance, who had walked with him to the Houſe of God in company. The ſence whereof when he was awakened to ſee and feel in his own Conſcience, the heinouſneſs of his Crime in ſlandering his Brethren, did ſo terrifie him, that it could*

not

not be discerned (either by his Relations, or any of those many of his Brethren whom he had offended, who came to visit him, and endeavoured to pour Balm into, bind up, and heal his deep wounds) that at any time afterwards he enjoyed any peace in his Soul.

The principal inducement to publish a Narrative of this Man's Trouble of Spirit, and Miserable End, is to give an Impartial Account to many who desire to be truly informed thereof, what Conferences were had with him, what Papers on this Subject were left behind him, and that the whole may be a seasonable Caution to all who read them, to take heed how they do in any case whatsoever presume to sin against the clear Light, Knowledge, and Dictates of their own Conscience: for which end it is intended to say something briefly concerning the Nature and Office of Conscience, and that attendance which every man is to give to it.

But for the avoiding of all sinister Reflections on what is herein undertaken, the Publishers hereof do declare,

First, *That they do not ascribe this Man's Miserable End to any Conscientious Change of Opinion in Matters of Religion or Worship, or to any Endeavour of his to propagate Union amongst Christians in a candid way, by proper Arguments; but they lay the stress of his Miscarriage where he fixed it himself, that is, upon his Backsliding from the Ways of God, forsaking that which was Good, doing that which he knew to be Evil; and upon his Hypocrisie, Pride of Spirit, Covetousness, and his unjustifiable Calumniating, Reproaching, Reviling, and Accusing many of his Brethren of such things as he knew they were not guilty: All which he acknowledged in his own Papers, and frequently charges himself with.*

Secondly, *We are so far from Censuring any Attempts that have been made in a Christian manner for a more full and firm Union amongst all good Protestants, that we heartily wish we could*

could ſee more Hearts (and ſuch Hands as are fitly qualified for it) at work on this Subject: for bleſſed are the Peace-makers, and the Fruits of Righteouſneſs are ſown in peace of them that make peace.

Thirdly, *To ſhew our good Will to ſuch an Undertaking, we ſhall upon this occaſion, after we have made ſome brief Reflections on the Nature and Office of Conſcience, and finiſhed the Narrative of this Man's Troubles, aſſume the Argument, and according to that meaſure of Faith and Knowledge which God hath given us, ſpeak the Truth in Love, in order to the obtaining (if it may be upon a right Foundation) a better Underſtanding, and from thence a more full and firm Union among all who love the Lord Jeſus in Sincerity.*

REMARKS

REMARKS
UPON THE
Nature and Office
OF
CONSCIENCE.

HERE we have a recent and pregnant Inſtance of the powerful and perpetual proſecution of an offended and an awakened Conſcience, the Horrors whereof were ſo dreadful and unapeaſable, that all Attempts, either to divert the Thoughts to other Subjects, or apply the Mind to the receiving or uſing of mitigating or healing Remedies, were altogether ineffectual. Jer. 20. 2, 3. Pſ. 119. 21.

Herein we may alſo perceive, how the Terrors of ſuch a Mind are aggravated beyond the rate of Natural Impreſſions, proportional to the help which Natural Light receives by Education, Converſation and Acquaintance with Divine Revelation. Heb. 10. 26, 27.

The Philoſopers, (whom we eſteem Heathens) as being ſtrangers to the Will of God revealed, and Covenant of Grace treated of in the Scriptures) from the dictates of Natural Light, compariſon of Good and Evil, Moral Virtues and Vices, Tranquility and Perturbations of Mind, which enſued the reflection upon good and evil Actions, went very far in deſcribing the proper Office of Conſcience, and thoſe Horrors which were the Conſequents of Heinous Offences.

But this Man hath ſo much the more exceeded them all, by how much the Remedies properly applicable to a peninent ſinner (through the Benefits of a Mediatour) were more known and oppugned by him than by any of them.

They

They could, and did, write of an universal and immuatable Law engraven on the Mind of Man, as that there was one eternal righteous God to be worshipped, and with respect as well to future as present Rewards and Punishments, was to be reverenced and feared, Parents to be honoured, our Neighbours not to be injured in their Persons or Properties, and that what we would not have done to us, that we should not do to another. That this Law was known to the generality of Mankind by its effects, and by natural anticipations and common notions of Good and Evil imprinted in Humane Nature.

Πεφλάκασι φυσικαῖς καὶ κοιναῖς ἐννοίαις.

And altho' by the introducing or intermixture of some Notions, as the Rule of discerning and judging the Morality of Actions, which are not proper and adequate Rules for the directing of Conscience to make a right Judgment, as our own good Intentions, other Mens Example or Doctrines, and the like, Conscience may be misguided, and from such Premises make wrong Conclusions, as it may also happen (through Ignorance) by a wrong application of the proper and adequate Rule, yet that Rule remains a fixt and permanent Faculty in the rational Soul, a connate Habit in the Practical Understanding, in such manner as that when the Mind and Memory are awakened and stirred up rightly to discern and apply that Rule to Actions past, it will be made evident, that it is above the power of any man to give himself or any other an absolute dispensation from this adequate Rule and Law of Conscience, which God hath erected in our Hearts, as his Tribunal; and our neglect of this Rule, or suffering our Consciences to be mislead by any other, will (when the Vail is taken off) be no excuse, but rather an aggravation, (at least if it proceeded from a voluntary Ignorance) that we did not according to the power of natural light remaining in us, by a right application of the proper Rule, discern, measure and judge our own Actions, whether they were morally good or evil.

These Philosophers discerned, and by unanswerable Arguments from Demonstrations, evinced, that God created all things in order, and that therefore every created Being, together with, and in itself, (as the *Psalmist* also in the written Word of God declares) had its proper Law and Limit, without which that Order could not be considered, and that Humane Nature which was endued with a faculty or power of election, to do or refuse, was under the inspection of God to be incouraged and assisted; curbed, corrected or punished, as Men observed or acted contrary to that Law which was inscribed in their Natures. Hence

Psal. 148. 5, 6.

Hence they affirmed, (even as by Divine Ordination) the Reward of Virtue to be in itſelf, and that it was therefore to be followed, as that which always carried with it, and left behind it a ſingular profit, alſo that whilſt the Mind was quiet, as not being conſcious of any crime, it would reſtrain and ſtop the Mouth of paſſions, and prevail to the ſilent bearing of whipping, cutting, torturing, *&c.*

Juſtum & tenacem propoſiti virum Horat.
Non Civium ardor prava jubentium
Non vultus inſtantis Tyranni
Mente qualit ſolidâ : neque Auſter
Dux inquietæ turbidus Adriæ
Nec fulminantis magna Jovis *manus*
Si fractus illabitur Orbis,
Impavidum ferient ruinæ.

The juſt man's judgment and reſolved will,
No fury popular injoyning ill,
No urgent aſpect of a Tyrant's face
Doth ſhake, in ſetled Mind on ſolid baſe,
Nor the tempeſtuous South-Winds, which command
Rough *Adria*'s Seas, nor *Jove*'s great thund'ring hand,
If Ruins overwhelm, and crackt World fall,
Undaunted like he bears the ſhock of all.

But on the contrary, that a notorious wicked Conſcience was like an Ulcer in the Body, and that none could ever impoſe upon a hot burning Conſcience, or perſwade, that ſuch an one ſhould not cry out, or not tare his hair, or not ſmite his breaſt, ſo much more violent is the ſence of having done evil, than that of Fire and Sword.

Exempto quodcunque, malo committitur ipſi Juven.
Diſplicet Authori ; prima eſt hec ultio quod ſe
Judice, Nemo nocens abſolvitur improba quamvis
Gratia fullacis Prætoris vicerit urnam
——cur tamen hos tu
Evaſiſte putes quos dire conſcia facti
Mens habet attonitos & furdo verbere cædit
Occultum quatiente animo tortore flagellum
Nocte dieque ſuum geſtare in pectore teſtem
Perpetua anxietas, nec menſæ tempore ceſſat.

What e're by ill example's done amiſs,
Troubles th' Author, the firſt revenge is this:
Himſelf being Judge, his Guilt he can't diſcharge,
Tho' the brib'd Judge and Votes, ſet him at large.
How think'ſt thou then, that thoſe eſcapes confin'd,
Accus'd of high Crimes by their conſcious Mind,
'Stoniſht, trembling, tortur'd within they ſtand,
Severely puniſht by a ſecret Hand:
Both night and day he bears within his Breaſt,
Perpetual Anguiſh, at his Meals no reſt.

Hence that vulgar ſaying, *Dat penas quicunque expectat:* They can never be happy, who always live in ſuſpicion and fear of Puniſhment: for that fear of puniſhment will haunt a perſon, that ſins heinouſly againſt his Conſcience, ſo long as it cannot be beyond contradiction proved and demonſtrated, that there is no juſt God to avenge his Crime.

Thus far have the learned Philoſophers and Poets proceeded upon the Principles of Natural Light, and common Experience, in the Deſcription of Conſcience, its Office and Effects, as not conſiſting in, and ariſing from a bare ſpeculative knowledge of things, but in and from a practical knowledge of the rule applied to the particular Fact done, or to be done, wherein the Divine Authority of the Law-giver, the rectitude of that uniform and univerſal Law written in Humane Nature, the quality of the Action, and intention of the Perſon, as known to God, and which might and ought to be known and conſidered by the Actor, with its conſequents, are all comprehended.

Others by their converſation with Holy Scripture, improving this Natural Light, have, according to the Laws and Rules thereof, confirmed, and in their Diſcourſes enlarged upon this ſubject, concerning the different qualities of Conſcience performing aright, or neglecting its proper Office, in judging according to preſent underſtanding, of things morally good or evil, by that Divine Law or Will of God manifeſt in them, or made known to them, which is and ought to be applied thereunto, and obſerved as the proper and adæquate Rule thereof.

Rom. 2. 15, 16. And theſe ſay that Conſcience, aſſiſted with a ſummary of Principles contained therein, is by its Office to ſearch into, and diſcern the lawfulneſs or unlawfulneſs of things, and to direct and order how things lawful in themſelves may be performed in a right manner,

ner, and to right end; and how things, either evil in themſelves, or of an ill tendency, ought to be forborn and avoided; alſo to reveiw and examine actions done by us, both as to their matter and form, whether they be good or evil: and that every man is highly concerned to take good heed to this Rule by which his Conſcience ought to be guided, becauſe its determinations are like unto thoſe of a ſupreme Dictator, ſpeaking Oracles within us, and exerciſing an Authority over us, having in that reſpect ſome kind of co-ordinate power and authority with God; and for that alſo, as Conſcience without Divine Authority, will not juſtifie an action, ſo God will not accept it, without the concurrant authority of Conſcience; without the one, our pretended ſervice is unlawful, without the other unreaſonable.

The perfect, and that which is to every Chriſtian the only adæquate Rule of Conſcience, being the Will and Law of God written in the Heart, and revealed in the Scripture; it is hence preſumed, that every Chriſtian is endued both with a natural and an enlightned Mind and Conſcience: and this Will and Law of God, comprehended under theſe two general branches, hath an immediate and ſoveraign authority over their Conſcience. It is God alone who knows the inward workings thereof, and he only can puniſh it when it ſinneth; and the obligation which lies upon the Conſcience of every Chriſtian to obſerve Humane Laws and Conſtitutions, as they correſpond with this Divine Law, is becauſe God hath as well by his Law written on the Heart, as his revealed Will in the Scriptures commanded it ſhould be ſo: and hence it is that natural Obligations, and ſuch humane Conſtitutions as correſpond with this Divine Law, are not infringed, but corroborated by Chriſtianity; for that diſcharges no man from, but better informs every man in the knowledge of his Duty towards God and Man; and binds the Conſcience of every Chriſtian to the diſcharge of all relative Duties in his ſtation amongſt Men, as he will anſwer it (not only to thoſe who have Authority on Earth, but alſo) to God himſelf, if againſt the light and obligation of Conſcience he therein tranſgreſſeth the Will of God. 1 Pet. 2. 13, 14, 15. Rom. 13. 1, 5.

In this reſpect *Chriſtians* have a double advantage, and are under a double Obligation above all others. For, 1*ſt*, They partake in common with other Men of the univerſal Law of Nature, engraven on the Heart, which no poſitive or revealed Inſtitution diſcharges any Man from. 2*ly*, They have the Written and Revealed Will and Law of God in the Holy Scriptures, with which, by 1 Tim. 5. 8. Hoſ. 6. 6. 1 Pet. 2. 18.

Divine Grace and Providence, they are priviledged above others, and, through Faith, enabled to make a more clear and distinct Judgment of the Principles and End as well of Divine as Moral Actions; as they tend to the Service and Glory of God, the Good of their Neighbours, and their own Peace and Happiness.

Rom. 2. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. 2 Cor. 1. 12.

Hence also it is, that the Peace, Comfort and Joy of a *Christian*, proceeding from the discharge of a good Conscience towards God and Man, exceeds all that can be apprehended by a meer natural light, as having some savour and relish in its Soul of that love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, and of that peace of God which passeth understanding.

Phil. 4. 7. Eph. 3. 19.

For though the fredom from the accusation of conscience be not his compleat justification before God, yet it gives him confidence towards God: and on the contrary, the confusion, darkness, perplexity, horrour and despair of a person acquainted with the Will of God, revealed in the Scriptures, wilfully sinning against Knowledge and the expres dictates and judgment of his own Conscience, do far exceed all that can be spoken by such who have no other but a natural light; for though that extends itself very far, yet the severity of God against such transgressions is more clearly and distinctly represented in the Holy Scriptures, than in any other Writings; for as the sin of such a person hath in it all manner of aggravations to render it most heinous, so the Judgments of the righteous God therein revealed against such an impenitent sinner, are of all others declared to be the most dreadful, intolerable, unavoidable, irremediable, endless.

1 Cor. 4. 4. 1 Rom. Rev. 20. 12, 13, 14, 15. Zeph. 1. 14, 15, 17, 18. Luke 9. 25. Heb. 2. 2, 3. ch. 12. 25. 1 Thes. 5. 3. 2 Pet. 2. 1. Mat. 16. 26, 27.

It is not our intention to speak any thing herein more largely concerning the Nature and Effects of Conscience, than what is to our present purpose; many entire and useful Discourses of very learned and pious Persons are extant on this Subject, wherein is observed, (that which we are all obliged to take notice of) that God by his providence hath preserved in the innermost seat of our hearts some *(scintillulæ)* little sparks of that greater light, wherewith the mind of man was invested before his fall; that these sparks of light are continued with us, that they may be publishers of the good Pleasure and Will of God concerning us, and monitors of our obedience. 1*st*, To those common Principles of his Law written in our Hearts, (to do Good, and eschew Evil) which by reason of their highest evidence, instantly as soon as they are offered to our mind and thoughts, command our Faith, and compel our Assent. 2*ly*, To his revealed Will, contained in the Holy Scriptures, so soon as thro'

thro' his grace, either by the Diſcourſe or Writings of others, or by our own ſearch, we have the knowledge thereof.

And by how much any man does frequent and exerciſe his natural Light in the ſtudy and ſearch after the knowledge of this revealed Will of God, his Creator and only Lord and Law-giver, and thereby ſquare and order his Inclinations, Affections, and Converſation, by ſo much the more ſhall he be ſecured from, and ſtrengthened to reſiſt the raging tyranny of his own inbred Luſts, and blind and lawleſs Appetite, and the inchanting Flatteries, Inticements, Diſcourſes, and Examples of men of corrupt minds, and deſtitute of the truth; who for the more effectual razing out of our minds (as much as is poſſible) the little remains of natural Light, and blinding the mind, and hardning the heart againſt the perception and reception of ſupernatural Light, do all they can to ſet the Conſcience free from all Obligations to the Will and Law of God, by introducing and ſetting up in the mind another Rule, *viz.* that of their own Appetite, private Intereſt and Utility: Than which, nothing can be more rebellious againſt God, pernitious to humane Society, or deſtructive to him that hath drenched in ſuch a damnable Deluſion.

2 Cor 4 6. Joh. 7. 16, 17. Hoſ. 6. 3. 2 Tim 3. 14. *to the end.* Eph. 4. 17, 18, 19. ch. 5. 5, 6. Judg. 10. 11. 1 Tim. 6. 3, 4, 5. 2 Pet. 12. *to the end.* 2 Cor. 4. 4.

For as that firſt and great Command of God, *ſcilicet*, To love him with all the heart, and with all the ſoul, and with all the mind, and with all the ſtrength; and that ſecond, which is like unto it, To love our Neighbour as our ſelves, are the principal Branches of that Univerſal Law of God, whereby all other Branches thereof are to be interpreted, and on which all the reſt depend: ſo by Obedience thereunto in Faith, out of a pure Heart and good Conſcience, our Union, Fellowſhip, and Communion with God the Father, and his Son Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, and one with another, is maintained, confirmed, and enlarged; and we thereby brought to have our Converſation in Heaven whilſt we are on Earth, and prepared for everlaſting Habitations with the Saints in light. And on the contrary, they which are lovers of Pleaſures more than lovers of God, who make their God their Belly, glory in their ſhame, mind earthly things, ſtop the voice of their Conſcience, act contrary to its Dictates, and ſtrive to thruſt from them, as long and as far as they can, the terrors thereof, are, whilſt they remain upon Earth, on the very borders of Hell, and every moment ready to ſink into Deſtruction and everlaſting Perdition.

Mat. 22. 37, 38, 39. Mat. 12. 30. Tim. 1. 5. *to the 10th.* 1 Joh. 1. 3, 6, 7. Phil. 3. 20. 2 Tim. 3. 2, 3, 4. Phil. 3. 18, 19. Rom. 2. 5, 8, 9. Jam. 5. 3. 2 Tim. 6. 9, 10. 2 Pet. 2. 1, 2, 3.

We have made this brief Reflection on the Nature and Office of Conſcience, as deeming it may be now, and at all times, uſeful to

our

our ſelves and all that read it, whilſt remaining in the ſtate of the living; but we make not, ſo much as in our thoughts, any Reflection upon (or Application of any thing we have herein ſaid to) the ſtate of him that is dead, further than to declare how ſadly he experimented in the courſe and iſſue of his Life, what has been here ſpoken of; the horror of an offended and awakened Conſcience, and to exerciſe the Judgment of Charity, which only appertains unto us concerning his ſorrows for his ſin, fervent deſires to be forgiven of thoſe he has injured, attempts after a publick Recantation of his Evils, endeavours to repent and pray for forgiveneſs of God. The final Judgment we leave to him who is the proper and only Judge of the ſecrets of his heart, with our fervent Prayers to God, that we who have heard, and all that ſhall read the enſuing Narrative, treaſure up in our hearts what is therein inſtructive to us, ſo as to have it always ready in our minds, as a ſeaſonable Warning, never in the like or in any other caſe, wilfully to put to a peradventure the Eternal Salvation of our precious and immortal Souls.

A brief Account of the Life of Mr. John Child.

HE was born at *Bedford*, about the year 1638; and, when he was grown up, put Apprentice to an Handicraft Trade, which when he came of age he followed for ſome time: afterwards he betook himſelf to another Calling, and removed to *Newport-Pagnel*, where he lived divers years, married twice, and by his laſt Wife (of honeſt Parentage, and good Report) he had ſeveral Children; after his ſecond Marriage, in appearance he increaſed in his Eſtate. About five years ſince, he removed to *London*, and in *October* laſt he ended his days by hanging himſelf in a Houſe he had taken the laſt Spring in *Brick-lane* near *Spittlefields*.

He was endued with a competent meaſure of natural Parts, and vivacity of Spirit. In his youth he applied himſelf to the reading and ſtudy of the Scriptures, and attained to a greater knowledge in matters of Religion, than many of his Equals in years and Education. In his Opinion and Practice he was for the Baptiſm of Believers, and conforted with ſome of us, who are called *Anabaptiſts*, for about twenty years; and for divers years, at ſeaſons, exerciſed himſelf in Preaching.

He was obſerved for ſome years before his dreadful Fall, to be very remiſs in Religious Exerciſes; and in his ordinary Converſation,

to

to frequent other Company than he had done in former times.

He was of a very haughty Spirit, and peremptory in asserting his Opinions. He sought to exalt himself above what became either his Profession or Attainments. All which, when the Hand of God was heavy upon him for his open sins, he freely acknowledged with severe Charges against himself for his Pride and Hypocrisie, as you will find in the following Relations.

A Narrative of Mr. John Child's *Trouble of Spirit, and Deplorable End. Of some of the Conferences had with him in the times of his Troubles: and of such Papers as were written by him on this Subject.*

SOon after the said Mr. *John Child* had published his forementioned second Argument, which was about the latter end of the year 1682, he signified to some of his intimate Acquaintance, that his mind was perplext, for what he had therein done; but yet bare the trouble so, as not to make any great shew of it in his general Behaviour, until about the beginning of *July* 1684. when he could no longer bear or conceal the horrors of his mind, but spake of it to some that came accidentally to see him, and sent to several others of his Acquaintance to come to him, to whom when they came, he discloſed the miserable Condition into which he had brought himself, and the occasion thereof, in such manner, as that it became publickly known to many of his Acquaintance and Neighbours, and occasioned many, besides those sent for to visit and discourse with him, and others to write to him, the substance whereof, with his Answers, you have as follows.

Some Account of Mr. John Child, *by Mr.* — D.

MY Acquaintance with Mr. *Child* was of about fifteen years standing. About two years since meeting with a Book which I was informed he had caused to be published but two days before I saw it, I went presently and gave him a visit, and found him in his Chamber in a very pensive posture, his Eyes red with Tears, he immediately acknowledged he was the Author of it, and bitterly exclaimed against himself, that he wrote it in malice, and by the instigation of the Devil, from very ill principles of Pride, Vain-glory, and Hypocrisie. I quickly found the wound upon his Spirit was very deep, and therefore forbore all Aggravations, and endeavoured to administer some spiritual Relief to him. Af-

After this, in his Discourse to others, he seemed not to have so sharp a sence upon his Mind; but for ought I could observe, the Sore continued festered inwardly, from the first time he reflected upon his publishing that Book, to the end of his miserable Life, tho' it brake not out openly, till about *July* last. About *August* last I gave him another Visit, and then found him (tho' naturally of a strong Constitution and lively Spirit) so exceedingly shaken, that the horror of the sight made such deep impressions, as I think will at seasons recur, and set it self before me afresh, as long as I live. His Speech was very regular, which discovered his Memory to be good, and that his Distemper had not seized his Head, but his Heart. He freely discoursed the grief of his Mind, expressing and setting forth his Condition to be most deplorable, as having no hopes of salvation. I laid before him, with the greatest tenderness, the freeness and riches of Gods Grace, chusing to argue from his own former declared Opinion against limiting of it, but could fasten no word of consolation or hope upon him.

With some Reluctancy he granted me liberty to pray with him; but said, his Spirit was shut up, he could not pray; and while I was praying he often groaned, and after I had ended, told me, God would make him a terrible Example to this present Age, and tho' he was full of benignity, yet he was also a terrible God, being provoked. These Expressions, and the horror that appeared in his Eyes and all parts of his body, drew many tears from mine Eyes, and rendred the Spectacle so dreadful that (I cannot say as is reported of one that visited *Francis Spira*, that he would go a thousand miles to see another *Spira*; but on the contrary) I desire I may never see the like Spectacle again, whilst I live in this world.

He told me he thought (either in a dream, or when he was awake, he could not tell which) that I should say to him, If he died the common death of all men, the Lord had not spoken by me: I answered, He better knew the temper of my Spirit and Principles, than to conceive such a thought of me, or that I should take up the words of the Prophet of God divinely inspired, and apply them to him: but all I could say, abated nothing of the horror of his Soul, that I could perceive.

This Comment I make upon it, that if any Atheist in the world, who had formerly known this man, and had conversed with him in these his Agonies, he would have seen sufficient to have convinced him that there is a Power besides, and so much above Nature, as can with a touch shake and disorder, and turn into confusion the strongest

eſt conſtitution of body, by miniſtring and faſtning terrible things upon the Soul.

That when God wounds the Spirit of a man, neither he himſelf can bear it, nor can any other aid him. Therefore it is a fearful thing to fall under the Wrath of the living God, who is a conſuming Fire, and can at his pleaſure awaken a ſtupid Conſcience, and revive upon it the memory and horror of ſuch ſins as ſeem to be paſt over and forgotten.

My Prayer is, that this man being made as a Pillar of Salt, may warn the preſent and future Ages of the danger of ſinning againſt the preſent Light of their Underſtandings.

The Effect of a Conference between Mr. John Child *and Mr.* B. K.

ABout the middle of *July* 1684. Mr. *B. K.* went to ſee Mr. *Child*, not hearing the leaſt report of any trouble he was then under, and after ſome diſcourſe which paſſed between them, Mr. *K.* occaſionably mentioned that Book called, *A Second Argument*, telling Mr. *Child*, he was reported to be the Author thereof: which he preſently acknowledged, and cried out againſt himſelf in a bitter manner, ſaying, What he had done therein, was out of Malice and Revenge againſt thoſe People; and ſeemed to abhor himſelf for caſting ſuch abominable Reproaches upon them, whom he ſaid, he knew deſerved it not; and preſently deſired Mr. *K.* to go up ſtairs with him, which he did: and then he farther ſignified to him his deplorable condition, and what horror and anguiſh of Soul he lay under, and that there was no mercy for him. And Mr. *K.* being on a ſudden ſurprized with his deep expreſſion of horror, of which he had heard nothing, it did amaze him; yet he endeavoured with the utmoſt of his ability to comfort him, by ſhewing the greatneſs of Gods mercy to true penitent perſons, together with the infinite worth and value of Chriſt's Bloud, telling him withal, that he was glad to find he had the ſence of his great Evil on his heart, or words to that effect, and that he hoped this breaking, was in order to healing: But Mr. *Child* ſaid, he doubted of that. And all the Words and Arguments Mr. *K.* could uſe to ſatisfie him, were in vain: ſo that at that time, it being late at night, he took his leave of him.

Mr. *K.* Soon after, he came to ſeek me at my houſe; but then I could not ſtay long with him.——But a few days after, when he ſent for me, I went, and found him in bed rowling and tumbling up and down in a lamentable manner, enough to pierce ones heart. I

ſaid to him, *Mr.* Child, *I thought by your deportment, when you was at my houſe, the burden was pretty well off*; or to that effect.

Mr. Child. *No, no, my burden is greater than I can bear——I would fain be ſatisfied as touching one thing.*

Mr. K. *What is that?*

Mr. Jo. Child. *Whether my ſin may not be that againſt the Holy Ghoſt.*

Mr. K. *I hope and believe it is not.*

Mr. Child. *But I wrote the Book out of malice.*

Mr. K. *There is a great deal of difference between doing a thing out of malice and prejudice againſt the Lord's People, and acting out of malice againſt Chriſt himſelf, or doing deſpight to the Spirit of Grace. I do not doubt, but that you always had holy and reverent dread and reſpect to the Name of God, tho' you might take up a great offence againſt ſome of his People.*

Mr. Child. *I have often had that Scripture brought to me,* Pſal. 50. 19, 20. Thou giveſt thy mouth to evil, and with thy tongue thou forgeſt deceit. Thou ſitteſt and ſpeakeſt againſt thy brother, and ſlandereſt thy mothers ſon. *And of that which follows:* Conſider this, ye that forget God, leſt I tear you in pieces.

Mr. K. *But pray obſerve, tho' you ſhould be guilty of that great evil there mentioned, yet there is ground of hope in that you are exhorted to conſider*——I uſed many Arguments to perſwade him to rely on the mercy of God thro' Chriſt, mentioning that paſſage of the Prophet *David, Forgive me my ſin, for it is great*; and how wonderfully he had manifeſted and magnified the attribute of his mercy, in pardoning great and bloudy ſinners.

Mr. Child. (Breaking forth into bitter tears, cried out) *I know that the Majeſty of Heaven is a good and gracious Being, yet when provoked* (ſtretching forth his hands in a frightful manner) *he is a terrible God.*

Mr. K. *I think it is neceſſary that you retract what you have written in that Book, for that I think nothing ſhort of it will be a demonſtration of the ſincerity of your heart, and proof of the truth of your repentance.*

Mr. Child. *I have begun to write, but I cannot write, neither have I any one of the Books.*

Mr. K. *I will ſee and get you one of them, and ſend it to you.*

At another time I adviſed him to conſult ſome Phyſician about his health.——To which he made no anſwer.

Mr. K. *Shall I acquaint any perſons with your condition?* (mentioning ſome worthy Miniſters to him, whom he knew Mr. *Child* formerly had a great eſteem for.)

Mr.

Mr. Child. *I ſhould be glad to ſee Mr.* P.

Mr. *K.* aſſured him he would do his endeavour therein, and accordingly did, and made known his fearful ſtate to divers others; by which means Mr. *J.* ſent him a comfortable Letter, and many godly perſons went to viſit him.

Mr. *K.* at another Viſit not long before his death, perceiving the anguiſh of his Spirit was rather greater than ever, asked him, *Have you not yet any more light?*

Mr. Child. *No, nor never ſhall.*

Mr. K. *Shall I and two or three more, ſuch as you ſhall beſt approve of, come and ſtend ſome time in Prayer to the Lord for you?* —— To which hegave no anſwer, tho' much preſt to it.

Mr. *Child* at another time ſaid, *I have touched the Apple of God's Eye———I am damned.*

Mr. *Child*'s Wife ſaid, That ſhe found ſometimes in the night-ſeaſon, that the very ends of his Hair did ſtand in drops, thro' the anguiſh of his Spirit, continually crying out againſt himſelf for writing that Book.——

A Letter in *July* 1684. from Mr. *J.* to Mr. *Child.*

I Am informed that your Soul is greatly afflicted in the ſence of your Evil: I deſign not to add to your griefe, but as I ought to pity the afflicted. Our Lord will not break the bruiſed Reed, nor quench the ſmoaking Flax: And I have learned from him my part, the duty of a true Neighbour, to do what I can for cleanſing and healing the Wounds you have made in your own Conſcience.

Therefore, I pray you conſider, 1. *God's own Children are ſometimes guilty of backſliding.* 2. *That 'tis the Will of God, they ſhould return to him from whom they have revolted.* 3. *That he is ready to receive and heal them upon their return; and I pray God you may be helpt to ſay the next words in ſincerity of heart:* Behold I come unto thee, for thou art the Lord my God.

Conſider, upon repentance and returning, God will abundantly pardon ſuch as have abundantly ſinned. The Lord help you to plead as David *did,* For thy name ſake, pardon my iniquity, for it is great. Iſai. 55. 7. Pſal. 25. 11.

Conſider, Chriſt is able to ſave to the utmoſt, them that come unto God by him. *Let theſe few Lines be acceptable to you, from him who prayeth for you, and remains* Your Cordial Friend, Heb. 7. 25.

J. J.

Upon the receipt and reading this Letter, Mr. *Child* was heard to ſay, *What! is* J. J. *whom I have ſo greatly envied, ſo kind to me?* and preſently ſet Pen to Paper, and writ, and in ſome few days ſent a doleful Letter to the ſaid *J. J.* A Copy whereof follows.

Mr. *J.* July 30. 1684.

YOurs I received this day, but without date, the latter part of which hath attained its wiſh and deſire; for it is very acceptable unto me, and can be no otherwiſe, where the leaſt degrees of gratitude do remain. And for the Expreſſions of your Chriſtian love, and deſires of my happineſs in all reſpects, lays a double obligation upon me to eſteem your friendſhip. What you have been informed of, my Souls affliction, is true, and I think no ſmall cauſe for it, diſhonour to God, grieving his Spirit, ſinning againſt Chriſt, blaſpheming his Tabernacle, perſecuting the Saints, grieving and wounding thouſands dear to Jehovah; *ſtumbling the Weak, ſhortning Life, weakning Senſes, deſtroying rational Powers, giving occaſion to the wicked to blaſpheme, and the uncircumciſed to rejoyce; the deſtroying inward Peace and outward Felicity, the turning Light into Darkneſs, and the Noonday into horrible Night; the provoking God to make the Heavens Braſs, the Earth Iron, and the Rain nothing but Powder and Duſt; the ſhutting a man out from the comforts of the Promiſes, and bringing of him under the moſt diſmal Threats that ever an Almighty Being gave forth; marring all Comforts, ſpoiling all Joys, making the Life a Burthen, and Death a Terrour; the putting beſides Duty, and all acceptable improvements of Talents; the giving the Devil advantage, and bringing the Salvation into imminent danger; the being poſſeſt with Doubts, Fears, and Tremblings night and day; the ſad ſavour of Gall and Wormwood, and harſh reliſh of Gravel-ſtones; the ſad apprehenſions of Curſes, Blaſting, and Mildew, of Caterpillars, Locuſts, and Cancer-worms; the diſmal ſound of the mad Prophets words,* I ſhall ſee him, but not now, I ſhall behold him, but not nigh, *is a ſufficient ground of Soul-affliction. Your tender aim and charitable deſign in the balmy Application you ſent, I have reaſon well and kindly to reſent, and wiſh they had been high enough to hit the mark, and have anſwered the deſign. Had I been a Backſlider of an ordinary ſize, they might have had an effectual Operation: but to that it's vaſtly different; I have a Voice behind me, or dire Texts, that make a dreadful ſound. To love and to make lyes, is a qualification for the Lake. He ſhall have Judgment without mercy, that ſhewed none. To offend one little one, is a ſin againſt Chriſt, and a condition worſe than to have a Milſtone about the neck with a caſt into the Sea. To ſlander the Mothers Son, is near deſtruction by a tearing to pieces; but what is prepared and*

juſtly

justly deserved, for condemning many Generations of the just, branding and wounding and grieving Thousands and Ten Thonsands of good and just Men, by charging Consequences upon their Principles, beyond the sence of their minds, and rendring them not only mislead and deceived, but no Church, no Christians, vile Monsters, Infidels, Robbers of God, nay, Murderers of the worst sort and highest order, great Enemies to their Native Country; but the aking of my Heart, stops the progress of my Hand, upon the repetition of these astonishing things. I thank you for your kindness; I beg pardon for my own shortness, and conclude these Lines very sad and hopeless.

John Child.

After the receipt of this from Mr. *J. Child*, *J. J.* wrote again to him to this effect:

Mr. John Child, Aug. 1. 1684.

IN continuance of my tender Compassions, because of your Soul's Afflictions, and being encouraged by your kind acceptance of those few Lines I sent you before, I now write again, taking notice of your many doleful Expressions, wherein you highly, and, I hope, humbly aggravate your Backsliding from God, wronging his Servants, and toward the close, that my application of God's healing backsliding Children, might have hit the Mark, had you been a Backslider of an ordinary size; Now therefore, that I may be a little helpful to your distressed Soul, (if the Lord please to support you from sinking into the sad Gulph of Despair,) 1st. *Consider the greatness of* David's *sin of Adultery, and contriving the Death of* Uriah, *yet being truly penitent, he was graciously pardoned.* 2ly, *The greatness of* Manasseh's *Sins, his Idolatry, causing his Children to pass thro' the Fire, using Inchantments and Witchcrafts, dealing with Familiar Spirits, filling* Jerusalem *with Innocent Blood; yet humbling himself in his misery, he obtained mercy of God.* 3ly, *That God hath offered mercy to scarlet and crimson sinners.* 4ly, *Not only to ordinary but extraordinary backsliders.* 5ly, *To* Peter, *after he denied his Master with Cursing and Swearing.* 6ly, *Christ came to save the chief of sinners.* 7ly, *He will in no wise cast off any that come to him, and is able to save them to the utmost. Submit therefore to Mercy upon a probability; upon a perhaps God may forgive; Go to Christ as one condemned, and deserving to be executed, and plead, that you have heard the King of* Israel *is a merciful King. Thus, with my Prayers for you, I am*

Your Soul's real Friend,

J. J.

After

After Mr. *John Child* received this Letter, Mr. *J. F.* and other Friends viſiting him, he read it to them, trembling and paraphraſing thereon, ſadly bemoaning himſelf, ſaying, that the mercy that *David*, *Manaſſeh*, and *Peter* had, did not belong to him, and wept bitterly.

Mr. *J. F.* adviſed him to write an Anſwer of that Letter, to Mr. *J. J.* which in few days he did, and ſent it by Mr. *F.* but before it was delivered, Mr. *Child* came himſelf to Mr. *J.* who gave him a friendly welcome, and asked how it was with him? he anſwered, I am very bad; it is very bad with me. Mr. *J.* replied, But God is very good, yea, abundantly good to them who have been abundantly bad to him. Mr. *Child* laid his hand upon his breaſt, and ſaid, I ſhall never loſe thoſe Notions of God's goodneſs, but what is that to me? I cannot make any application of it to myſelf, and as he was walking to and fro, greatly diſturbed in his mind, he made a ſudden ſtand, and ſaid, I think I am damned. To which Mr. *J.* returned to this effect: God's thoughts are not as Man's thoughts; ſometimes Men think of themſelves better than God thinks of them; ſometimes Men think worſe of themſelves, and of their ſtate, than God thinketh: I hope God's thoughts concerning you, differ from your thoughts in this latter ſence; think on that Text, *Iſa.* 55. 8. *My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, ſaith the Lord.* Mr. *Child* ſaid, I have Preached from that Text formerly, and preſently repeated theſe words: *Eſau* found no place for Repentance, though he ſought it carefully with Tears. Mr. *J.* replied, *Eſau* could not prevail with his Father. Then Mr. *Child* ſat down very ſad, and ſaid, I cannot repent. Mr. *J.* replied, Chriſt is exalted as a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and forgiveneſs of ſins; Therefore cry to him to give you this repentance. Mr. *Child* (after a little time of ſilence) repeated that word, He ſhall have judgment without mercy, that ſhewed no mercy.

Jo. 8 41, 44

Heb. 12. 17.

It is obſervable, that Mr. *Child*'s deſign in coming to Mr. *J.* was to engage him not to ſhew the Letter which he had ſent him by Mr. *F.* but to conceal it; and while they were reaſoning together, Mr. *F.* came in, and delivered the Letter to Mr. *J.* but after he had read it, he told Mr. *Child*, it was not convenient to conceal the matter of it, becauſe it would engage godly perſons to pray for him; but Mr. *Child*, with a dreadful look, fixed his Eyes on Mr. *J.* ſnacht the Letter out of his hand, and then was troubled he had ſo done; whereupon Mr. *J.* conſented to his carrying it away,

away, that he might not increase the trouble of his mind; which Mr. *Child* took kindly: and so they parted.

After the death of Mr. *Child*, that Letter was found among his Papers; a Copy whereof take as follows.

Mr. J. J.

YOur kind and Christian Letter I received, and I thank you for the great Pains you took to comfort me, and keep me from immediate desperation; but still my Burden remains great, and mine Iniquities are great, and many Old Sins, as well as some of late date, come to mind; ---- *Wrath is coming to the utmost: I am forsaken of God; Good Men are mine Enemies; I hate my self; I am afraid and ashamed abroad; I am confused and distracted at home; The Scriptures look dreadfully upon me; I have not only taken up a Reproach against my Neighbour, which excludes a man God's holy hill,* Psal. 15. *but have raised Reproach, invented Reproach, and by it wronged multitudes; slanderously reported it to the Nation: It's just by St.* Paul's *sentence, Afraid I am to live, afraid I am to die; Judgment I fear will be terrible in this World, and more in the World to come: Some mens sins go before-hand to judgment, and those that do not, cannot be hid when we come before the great Tribunal; I cannot give an account of my Actions to Men, how much less to God, my Heart condemns me, and he is greater, and knows more; I think I have not only outdone* Cain, Balaam, *and* Judas, *but many of the Devils themselves; What I acted against Men was at an ill time; there is all bad Circumstances attended my Actions; I could not have thought I had done such things, till I lately lookt them over; I dread Damnation, but can see no way to escape; I know God's mercy is great above the Heavens, but it is barred up and cannot pass to me, I cannot perform the condition of obtaining; I have dismal Temptations, they have almost broken me to pieces; I am not reconciled to those I have offended, how then shall my gift be accepted; If I am justly sentenc'd on Earth, it is bound in Heaven; how then shall it be reversed? my Friends will not be reconciled and at peace with me: Much more I could write, but want time. I remain him that calls himself, a Devil incarnate.*

To which Letter of Mr. *Child*'s--- Mr. *J.* upon the memory of what he had read, might before Mr. *Child* took it out of his hand, return an Answer to this effect, That he simpathiz'd with his Sorrows, and was very much concerned at the dreadful charge therein laid upon himself, which by all the Arguments in Scriptures he could think upon, he endeavoured to remove the weight that oppressed

preſt his mind from their influence, and particularly, that his Brethren whom he had offended, were ready with open Arms and Hearts to receive him, and forgive any wrongs he had done unto them. Much of the Matter of the Letter we have omitted, becauſe of its ſimilitude with what he had formerly wrote.

The Effect of ſeveral Conferences between Mr. Child, *and Mr.* H. C.

MR. *C.* I am come, Mr. *Child*, with a deſign to ſerve your Soul, if it lye in my power.

Mr. *Child.* God hath for ſeveral Years paſt, been rending and tearing me in my Eſtate, curſing and blaſting all I have put my hand to, and proſpered me in nothing, (and, in much horror, clapping his hands to his Heart, ſaid,) Here it is, and I ſhall die.

Mr. *C.* I am informed your Trouble ariſes from the publiſhing a Book, entituled, *The Second Argument for a more firm Union amongſt Proteſtants.* What part of that Book troubles you moſt?

Mr. *Child.* (Taking up the Book in his hand, began to read where he ſaith, the greateſt Number of Diſſenters do hold Principles dangerouſly heretical, and moſt abominably abuſing the moſt holy and bleſſed God, *&c.* but before he could end that Paragraph, being under extreme agony of mind, and weeping bitterly, put the Book from him, and ſpake to this effect, *viz.*) I have repreſented thoſe of *Calvin*'s Principles beyond whatever they conceived, ſtrained their Opinions beyond their Intentions, and drawn ſuch Conſequences as never were in their minds, and, ſtriking his breaſt with much anguiſh, ſaid, Theſe Words lye cloſe; I ſhall never get over this; I writ in prejudice againſt them, calling them a villanous body of People, which was unjuſt.

Mr. *C.* ſaid, Are you not heartily ſorrowful for writing this?

Mr. *Child.* Oh that I could repent; I cannot repent.

Mr. *C.* If it were now to do, would you do it again? the beſt part of repentance is to turn from evil.

Mr. *Child.* I know there is in Repentance three things; *Confeſſion*, *Contrition*, and *Reſtitution.*

Mr. *C.* We are not capable of making God reſtitution, he pardons and juſtifies for his own Name's ſake, and Chriſt's ſake; but reſtitution is to be made to our Neighbour; and if you are ſenſible God hath been diſhonoured, and his People wronged in that Book, your next work is to make reſtitution in like manner, by a publick Recantation.

Mr. *Child.*

Mr. *Child.* This is the opinion of ſome others alſo, and I think it ought to be done; (and walking about the Room, with great horror of ſoul, ſaid,) I have been guilty of many Evils: I have for ſeveral years lived a very ungodly Life, neglected Family-duty, Cloſet-duty, Publick-duty in the Church of God; I have been greatly guilty of Pride, endeavouring to run every man down in diſpute; I have made this World my God, and been guilty of that Idolatry, *Eph.* 5. I have not been a little guilty of Hypocriſie; I have endeavoured by all ways and means to ſhake the Croſs of Chriſt from off my ſhoulders; and I fear I have been guilty of Blaſphemy: I have wronged many a poor Soul by writing as I have done; I have wiſhed myſelf in their condition, and would have given many Thouſands of Pounds, (had I had it) to have been in as good a condition as ſome of them I writ againſt: I have diſcourſed you, and Mr. *B.* and *J.* and have thought to run down your Opinion by a Spirit of Inſolency and Pride, but the Judgments of God have followed me; he hath rent and torn me for theſe things, and now I ſhall die, I am ſtruck with death.

Mr. *C.* Suppoſe you ſhould die to Night, (as we know not how it may be with any of us) can you contentedly ſink into the Abyſs of Miſery, without ſtriving for Salvation? would you not run to Chriſt? ſtrive to take hold of him and his purchaſed bleſſedneſs.

Mr. *Child,* (with a very grim countenance ſaid,) I ſhall go to Hell; I am broken in judgment; when I think to Pray, either I have a fluſhing in my face, as if I were in a flame, or I am dumb and cannot ſpeak, or elſe I fall aſleep upon my knees; all the ſigns of one whom God hath left forſaken and hardened.

Mr. *C.* If God ſhould impute to you the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, would it be of any advantage to you?

Mr. *Child.* If God would be ſo gracious, as to impute Chriſt's righteouſneſs to me, it would make me a happy man.

Mr. *C.* Did you do what you did, in writing that Book, againſt the light of your Conſcience, or motions of the Spirit?

Mr. *Child.* I think I did not formally ſin againſt the light of my Conſcience and Spirit of God; yet what I did, was mixt with malice, with this cheat in my heart, It may be it may do them good. The Night before the Book was publiſhed, I had ſome reluctancy and gripes of Conſcience.

Mr. *C.* Why did you not call them in before they were publiſhed?

Mr. *Child.* I fell ill upon it, and found myſelf more and more

entangled and ensnared; one door was opened, and another door was opened to my ruin, as if I were a man designed for damnation.

After some reasonings about Baptism, Conformity, and the Troubles which Nonconformists were under, (he said,) I have abundance of carnal fleshly Reasonings, I am under the power of unbelief and distrust; for these are my Arguings in me, Should I stick to the Church of *England*, then those I have written against, would account me the greatest Hypocrite in the world, to make so much ado about despair, for what I have done against them; Should I leave the Church of *England*, and stick to the Dissenters, and with full purpose of heart cleave to the Lord, then, if ever I am taken in a Meeting, they will have no mercy on me, and triumph, This is the Man who made his Recantation, and then ruin me to all intents and purposes, and I cannot bear the thoughts of a Cross, nor a Prison.

Mr. *C.* Two things are essentially necessary to the peace of your Soul, with all speed to publish your Recantation, and set your self to know the truth of God, and cleave to it.

Mr. *Child.* What an astonishing consideration is it for a man to die in this condition I am in; To be under horror for writing such things, and yet have no power to renounce it; for should I do so, I should be quickly ruined in my Estate; I had a fancy the other morning, that the Sheriffs and their Officers were coming to seize all that I had; and about a week since I had that word, *Can thine heart endure, or thy hands be strong, in the day I will contend with thee?* I think I am now able to satisfie any *Atheist* in the world, that there is a God; for I find the Arrows of the Almighty sticking in me, and he runneth upon me as a Lyon. I thought, that I could go and fall at the feet of those I have wronged, and beg their forgiveness, and wished often, Oh that I could repent! O that God would wash me in the fountain of his Son's blood! O that I had faith, that I could believe!

Mr. *H. C.* (Taking leave of Mr. *Child*,) Can you not desire my Prayers?

Mr. *Child.* This is a hard Question; (and, after a little pause, taking Mr. C. by the hand, said,) for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ, pray for me at night, if there be any mercy yet left, that I may yet lye in the way of mercy.

Aug. 21. 1684. Mr. C. (Finding the Troubles of Mr. *Child* still continuing and increasing,) What do you think would give you relief?

Mr. *Child.*

Mr. *Child.* If I were in Heaven, it could not relieve me; for there I ſhould behold the face of a holy God, holy Saints and Angels, (as now I behold the face of good men upon Earth) with ſhame and confuſion of face.

Mr. C. If God would take you into his favour, that would relieve you.

Mr. *Child.* His wrath is come upon me to the uttermoſt.

Mr. C. To deſpair, reflects upon the Soveraignty of God's grace.

Mr. *Child.* For thoſe whoſe day of grace is not gone, God will multiply to pardon, but it is too late for me, my day is gone.

Mr. C. Did not you write a Book before the ſecond Argument? *Aug.* 30. 1684.

Mr. *Child.* I did.

Mr. C. Did not a Gentleman write ſome Animadverſions upon it, by way of Anſwer in a Manuſcript.

Mr. *Child.* He did.

Mr. C. Was it a ſufficient Anſwer.

Mr. *Child.* It was rationally anſwered.

Mr. C. Yet you printed this Book afterward.

Mr. *Child.* I did.

After ſome time of calm reaſoning, Mr. *Child* began to be again in a great horror, and ſpake to the effect following.

Mr. *Child.* I am one of the greateſt Hypocrites that ever lived upon the Earth, and ſhall be ſo accounted; God hath done his will, and will do his will upon me. *The wicked ſhall fall into miſchief, and the backſlider in heart ſhall be filled with his own ways; He that ſaith he ſhall have peace, and walketh in the imagination of his evil heart, the Lord will not ſpare him, but then the anger of the Lord, and his jealouſie ſhall ſmoke againſt that man.* Oh he thunders upon me! ſhould God let out the ſence of my ſins on me, (as he will) I ſhould houl like a Dog, roar like a Lyon, bellow like an Ox, mine inward parts would melt within me, as the braſs melts in the flaming furnace; I ſhall lye lower than *Judas*, lower than *Judas*, I have ſinned worſe than *Judas*.

Mr. C. You make application of the Curſes in the Book of God, but not of the Promiſes; Conſider *Iſai.* 55. *Pſal.* 34. 5.

Mr. *Child.* Promiſes are Bread for Children; They lookt on him, and were lightned; I look unto him, and am darkned; he knows, that I have committed ſuch wickedneſs as never hath been done.

Mr. C. Do you not ſometimes find an inclination to Pray?

Mr. *Child.* Seldom or never; onely about an hour before you came, I went about it, but the end was diſmal: That day you

were here with Mr. *W.* I attempted it three times, but could do nothing.

Mr. *C.* Shall I pray for you?

Mr. *Child.* No, no; 'tis too late: neither Men nor Angels can relieve me.

Mr. *C. Job* ſaith, *Tho' he ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him.*

Mr. *Child.* About two months ſince, I thought I had comfort and relief from thence, but now I cannot truſt in him; God ſaith he will deal in a ſingular manner with me here on Earth, and in Hell alſo.

Afterwards quoted againſt himſelf thoſe Expreſſions, *Heb.*10.26. *For if we ſin wilfully, after that we have received and acknowledged that truth, there remains no more ſacrifice for ſin.* 2 Pet. 2.20,21,22. *For if after they have eſcaped from the filthineſs of the world, through the acknowledging of the Lord and the Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, are yet tangled again therein and overcome, the latter end is worſe than the beginning; For it had been better for them, not to have acknowledged the way of righteouſneſs, than after they have acknowledged it, to turn from the holy commandment given unto them: But it is come unto them according to the true proverb; The dog is returned to his own vomit, and the ſow that was waſhed, to the wallowing in the mire.* And Mr. *Child* ſaid, When I am faint and low, I now take ſomewhat to refreſh me, but in Hell there is no refreſhment, not a drop of water to cool my tongue. I wonder that my Head (tho' it do not ake) doth not burſt aſunder; it is filled with diſmal Cogitations.

Sept. 13. 1684. Mr. *C.* with one Mr. *R.* gave Mr. *Child* another viſit, and Mr. *R.* put him upon ſaying the Lord's Prayer.

Mr. *Child.* I have thought of that, but I dare not ſay it, for theſe Reaſons: 1*ſt*, I cannot call God, *Father.* 2*dly*, I cannot ſay, *Thy Will be done.* 3*ly*, I cannot ſay, *Forgive me my Treſpaſſes as I forgive them that treſpaſs againſt me.*---- All that I have is curſt to me; I cannot give God thanks for what I eat and drink.

Mr. *C.* Have you a deſire to be ſaved?

Mr. *Child.* Yes, upon my own terms, and not according to God's.

It was then askt Mr. *Child*, what thoſe terms were? but he would make no anſwer; ſo we parted.

October 12. 1684.

A Conference of ſome Friends with Mr. John Child.

Company. THE laſt time I ſaw you, you ſaid, you had a peradventure to depend upon, and that was all; I hope you have that ſtill.

Mr. *Child.*

Mr. *Child.* No, all is gone.

Company. Is God gone, and Chriſt gone?

Mr. *Child.* All is gone; I am undone.

Company. I hope the Lord will return again.

Mr. *Child.* You cannot hope ſo concerning me.

Company. Where Chriſt begins a good work he will perfect it.

Mr. *Child.* If I had any; but all is gone (if ever I had any).

Company. You would do well to uſe the means of Grace, and frequent the Society of God's People, and deſire their Prayers, tho' you ſay you have no mind to pray nor deſire their Prayers, yet if you go among them, you know not what God may do for you. Conſider 2 *King.* 7. 4.

Mr. *Child.* I have been ſo great a ſinner againſt God and the People of God, that God will have no mercy for me.

Company. If God bring you out of this condition, it may be more to his honour and glory, and to your ſtrengthning and eſtabliſhing of his People, than all you have done in times paſt.

Mr. *Child.* God will glorifie himſelf by me, and make me an Example for the ſtrengthning and eſtabliſhing of his People; but it ſhall end in my deſtruction.

The ſubſtance of ſome Conferences held between Mr. John Child *and Mr.* E. P. *who was frequently with him in the year before he died.*

THE firſt time he ſaw Mr. *Child,* after he had declared his Trouble, he ſeemed to be in a very great Agony, often ſpreading out his Arms, lamentably expreſſing himſelf ſeveral times, and ſaid,

Oh that I might be a good man; but there is no hopes for me! It is now too late: I am the greateſt Hypocrite in nature.

Mr. *P.* Pray you, Mr. *Child,* inſtance in particulars.

Mr. *Child.* I have been a dreadful Hypocrite in offering Repentance, when I had none.

Mr. *E. P.* I am a ſtranger to any Repentance you offered.

Mr. *Child.* I have pretended ſuch a thing, tho' you know it not.

Mr. *E. P.* Do you intend any Repentance you have offered for the printing and publiſhing that Book?

Mr. *Child.* Yes.

Mr. *E. P.* It ſeems you confeſs you ought to repent of the publiſhing of that Book.

Mr. *Child.* Yes: it requires that Repentance that I ſhall never be able to give.

Mr.

Mr. *P.*'s Friend. Do you think that God is able to pardon you?

Mr. *Child.* No.

Mr. *P.* What is your reaſon?

Mr. *Child.* God hath ſworn in his wrath, that I ſhall never enter into his Reſt.

Mr. P. How do you know that God hath ſo ſworn concerning you?

Mr. *Child.* (Setting himſelf down, ſaid) I confeſs a man ſhould not affirm that which he hath no reaſon for.——But roſe up as one diſcontented, and gave no further Anſwer.

Mr. *P.* Pray you let me be more inwardly acquainted with the ſtate of your Soul.

Mr. *Child.* The wrath of God is kindled and burns within me—It is impoſſible for you to imagine my torment, and this is but an earneſt penny of my eternal damnation.———I have guilt enough upon me to ſink ſeventeen Kingdoms; and I know the Earth would open its mouth and ſwallow me up alive, like *Corah, Dathan,* and *Abiram,* were it not that God hath reſerved me to be a more publick Spectacle of his Anger and diſpleaſure, both to Angels and men.—God hath taken away my Tallent from me, and the influence of the divine Spirit hath altogether left me: I can neither pray, nor deſire others to pray for me; my heart is perfectly hardened.

Mr. *P.* Could you wiſh that thoſe that have an intereſt in God, ſhould improve it for you?

Mr. *Child.* How ſhould I, when I cannot deſire Jeſus Chriſt to pray for me? I am now out of hopes, for the Prayers of the Godly are recorded in Heaven againſt me, (flouds of tears flowing from his Eyes.) Dear bought Experience hath taught me, that it is not a ſmall thing to trifle with the great Concerns of Religion and Eternity, as moſt men account it. I have made a God of this World, and neglected God and his Chriſt; and therefore theſe things are juſtly come upon me. I have been a looſe and carnal Profeſſor; and if I were in the place of God, I ſhould meet the ſame meaſure that God doth to me. My Calamity is even at the door, and all men in a little time will juſtifie Gods dealing with me.

Mr. *P.* Pray you explain your ſelf in theſe things.

Mr. *Child.* (Evading further Diſcourſe) you ſhall have the full Account of it in print.

His Wife. Who ſhall print it?

Mr. *P.* I ſuppoſe Mr. *Child* intends ſome ſignal Impreſſion by Divine Vengeance.

Mr.

Mr. *Child.* Though what you have ſaid is true, yet it is not what I intended; for I have reſolved to give the World an Account of my Condition in a printed Paper.

Mr. *P.*'s Friend. This is an humbling Diſpenſation, that you are exerciſed under.

Mr. *Child.* An humbling Diſpenſation, do you call it! I tell you it is a hardening Diſpenſation, and I feel it to be ſo.

Mr. *E. P.* I hope there is mercy yet reſerved for you.

Mr. *Child.* I know I ſhall have mercy, ſuch as the damned have. I do highly juſtifie God in his dealings with me.

A Friend. Your juſtifying the dealings of God with you, is a good ſign.

Mr. *Child.* God can open the mouths of Reprobates to juſtifie his proceedings.

Mr. *P.* I hope that God will appear in a way of mercy to your Soul, if you ſincerely and heartily apply your ſelf to him.

Mr. *Child.* The moſt Judicious men know that I am a damned and loſt man.

Mr. *P.* (Walking with him in the Fields) You ſeem now to be more ſetled in your mind.

Mr. *Child.* Tho' no conſideration can yield me peace or comfort, yet the violence of my Torments admits of ſome intermiſſions; and therefore I am not ſo ſenſibly afflicted at all times, if I had but ſuch a ſence of my ſin as I ought to have, I ſhould burſt aſunder, or (like *Judas*) uſe extremity towards my ſelf.

Mr. *P.* What mean you by that paſſage (blaſpheming his Tabernacle) in your Letter to Mr. *J.*

Mr. *Child.* By it I intended reproaching and ſcandlizing the Church.

Mr. *P.* (Taking the Letter out of his pocket) Do you own the Contents of this Letter?

Mr. *Child.* Yes, and it was written by me as with the Pen of a ready Writer.———I would fain believe, but all power is taken away from me.

Mr. *P.* I have diſcourſed with Mr. *M.* about your Caſe, and it is his opinion, that a Recantation is your firſt ſtep in order to peace in your mind, and ſpoke it with much concern of your Soul.

Mr. *Child.* (Shedding many tears and expreſſing a paſſionate inquiry) Is this true, that he is concerned for me? By which expreſſion, with the manner of it, Mr. *P.* collected that it gave ſome eaſe to the mind of Mr. *Child*, to have his condition entertained in ſuch a Miniſters thoughts.

The

The ſubſtance of another Conference between Mr. John Child *and Mr.* H. D. *Mr.* E. M. *Mr.* F. *and Mr.* J. B.

Mr. *D.* HOW is it with you, Sir?

Mr. *Child.* I am in great confuſion and diſorder in my Spirit——I have ſinned againſt ſo much Grace, that I am without hopes of receiving mercy.

Company. If your trouble is in reſpect of the Book which you have written, whereby you have done ſo much injury to the ſuffering People of God, the beſt way we can adviſe you to, is to free your Conſcience from guilt, will be to make your Repentance and Recantation as publick as your ſin is, *Jo.* 7. 19.

Mr. *Child.* I muſt confeſs I ſtand greatly indebted to the Publick, but I am ſo confuſed in my mind, that when I think of doing it, I can do nothing.——There are three things which are a burden to me; my ſin againſt God, which is impardonable; my ſin againſt God's People; and another thing——

Company. What is that other? To which he made no Anſwer.

Company. Do you think that impardonable ſin you mentioned, is the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt?

Mr. *Child.* I cannot tell.

Company. Was what you did, done maliciouſly againſt God, Chriſt and the holy Spirit, and God's People?

Mr. *Child.* No.

Company. Then it may comfortably be concluded, you have not ſinned that ſin, and therefore you may take encouragement from the comfortable words of Chriſt, *viz.* that all other ſins and blaſphemies may be forgiven you, (quoting many proper Scriptures:) Conſider the inſtances of *David*, *Manaſſeh*, *Peter*, *Paul*, and the *Jews* who were guilty of crucifying our Saviour, and imprecated the guilt of his Bloud upon their Children, to whom yet our Saviour in his rich mercy commands his Diſciples firſt to preach the Goſpel. Is your condition worſe than theirs?

Company. It may be your Endeavours heretofore, too much to advance Free-will, and the power of the Creature, may be one reaſon why the Lord hath permitted you thus to fall.

Mr. *Child.* You have hit it, Sir; I once thought there was a power in man, but now I find it otherwiſe, for I cannot pray; the Lord hath taken away the gift of Prayer from me——I have no deſire after any thing that is good. I cannot repent.

Company.

Company. Chriſt is exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance and remiſſion of ſins.——Shall we now pray for you?

Mr. *Child.* Yes.

Then one of the Company prayed, and upon parting, Mr. *Child* thanked them for their Viſit, and ſaid to this effect: ——All this will make againſt me.

A Conference between Mr. John Child, *Mr.* T. W. *Mr.* A. B. *and Mr.* F. M.

Company. AS Phyſicians viſiting their Patients, ſo Friends, one that is wounded in Spirit, enquire what is the cauſe of his grief: We pray you declare your mind herein.——To this, for about half an hour, they could obtain no Anſwer.

Company. The Apoſtle *Paul* endeavoured to recover ſuch again as had fallen from an Article of Faith, without which they could not be ſaved; and counſelled others in meekneſs to inſtruct ſuch as oppoſe themſelves, if God peradventure would give them Repentance to the acknowledgement of the truth. What do you think of *Spira*'s condition? 1 Cor. 15. 12,13,14. 2 Tim. 2. 25, 26.

Mr. *Child. Spira*'s condition was nothing to mine; for wrath is come and coming on me to the utmoſt, becauſe I have forſaken that which I believed to be true, to embrace that which I knew to be falſe, thro' ſlaviſh fear to keep my ſelf from ſufferings.—I ſought to be great in the world, but God croſt me therein in all my deſigns. And ſince the hand of God hath been upon me, my Spirit hath often-times riſen againſt God that gave me nouriſhment by food and ſleep. (And looking to the Ceiling, ſaid,) I ſee as it were a little light thro' a cranny or creviſe, as if I would deſire to pray. (then Tears came down his Cheeks abundantly, and he ſaid,) If it would pleaſe God to manifeſt himſelf to me, I ſhould be ſuch a Monument of Mercy as never was in the world, to be a warning to all others.

Company. It's the Apoſtles councel, that we confeſs our faults one to another, and pray one for another, that we may be healed.

Mr. *Child.* (With Tears ſaid) I cannot get this baſe heart to open it ſelf farther.

Company. Shall we pray for you?

Mr. *Child.* No, no, no.

Company. It's deſired you would ſet down in Writing the heads of your chief Trouble.

Mr. *Child.* I did write ſomething to that effect; but when I had done, I deſtroyed it.

Some Paſſages between Mr. John Child *and ſome of his Friends, collected by Mr.* H. C.

Mr. *Child.* (with Mr. *R.*) I Had a turn in my Spirit the laſt week, as a reſult of that warm diſcourſe I had with you and Mr. *H. C.* concerning the eminency and ſoveraignty of the grace of God, but it is now gone again.

Mr. *R.* Implore again the Throne of Grace.

Mr. *Child.* I regard iniquity in my heart, and God will not hear my Prayer. (And ſaid to another) If God ſhould ſend an Angel from Heaven to inform him, he ſhould not believe it.

Mr. *Child* (to Mr. *W.*) I cannot pray.

Mr. *W.* How can you, ſo long as you have a Lye in your right hand? Retract what you have done publickly, or elſe you cannot expect to have an heart to pray.

Mr. *Child.* (To Mrs. *M.*) How deplorable a thing is this, that I who have preached ſo much of the Glory of another World, ſhould now be deprived of it all!—You will as ſurely ſee me damned, as you now ſee me ſtand here.

Mrs. *M.* Have you no intermiſſion?—Do ſuch thoughts always attend you.

Mr. *Child.* I have intermiſſion ſometimes.

Mrs. *M.* Do you think God cannot ſave you?

Mr. *Child.* Yes, he can; or elſe I might deſire to be in Hell immediately.

Mrs. *M.* Do you think God will not ſave you?

Mr. *Child.* I cannot believe that he will.

Mrs. *M.* What is the cauſe of all this trouble?

Mr. *Child.* That curſed Book.

Being at one Mr. *C.*'s, in diſcourſe concerning *Francis Spira*, Mr. *Child* ſaid, I am an hundred times greater ſinner than *Spira*, a thouſand times ten thouſand times, yea, a hundred thouſand times a greater ſinner than he.

Mr. *C.* Do you love me?

Mr. *Child.* I love you. (And taking Mr. *C.* by the hand, ſaid) I conjure thee by the eternal God, that thou take care of my Wife and Children: I would give ten thouſand worlds for a God, and often—Oh, what an ungodly Family have I! Husband cannot pray, Wife cannot

cannot pray, Children cannot pray, Servants cannot pray; while others are ſerving their God, we do nothing.

Mr. *P.* Mr. *F.* Mr. *L.* giving him a Viſit, asked if they ſhould pray with him?

Mr. *Child.* No, it is too late—The company of good men are a burden to me——They preſt him to publiſh Repentance for his Book that had cauſed him ſo much trouble.

Mr. *Child.* I have ſometimes thought ſo to do; but I am ſo confuſed and confounded in my mind, that I know not what to do: I can do nothing to purpoſe.

Mr. *L.* (Offering him ſome good Counſel, and he returning no Anſwer, ſaid) Do you think what I ſpeak is inſignificant? is there no weight in what we ſay?

Mr. *Child.* There is not only enough in what you ſay to raiſe a man from Earth to Heaven, but from Hell to Heaven, unleſs ſuch an one as I, who have an heart of a Devil—I have no heart to read or pray, all good is departed from me.

Mr. *Child*, to Mr. *M.* asking how it was with him, anſwered, Very ill.

Mr. *M.* Mean you in body, or mind?

Mr. *Child* walking up and down the Room very diſconſolate, looking much downward,

Mr. *M.* ſaid, Why do you look ſo much downward? Look up; for Salvation is not from beneath, but from above.

Mr. *Child* replied, I would look upward, but I cannot.——To another he ſaid, That helliſh Book would ruine him in Body and Soul.

Another ſaid, The learned Dr. *Twiſt* in his *Vindiciæ Gratiæ*, confeſſeth there were depths in the Controverſie between *Calvaniſts* and *Arminians*, which he could not fathom, yet he believed the truth againſt the *Arminians*.

Mr. *Child.* Oh I thought I could have dived to the bottom of it by parts, but I ſee I cannot.—And then, and at many other times ſaid—I am broken in Judgment, I have no conſiſtency in my ſelf: Adding—I have trifled in Religion, trifled, trifled many times: I am loſt; there is no hope, no hope.

Another Friend preſent with him, had mentioned and turned to *Prov.* 1. 25, 26. *Ye have ſet at nought all my counſel, and would none of my reproof: I alſo will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh.*

Mr. *Child* took the Bible, put his finger on the place, ſhewed it to us, and ſaid, That's my Portion.

Mr. *P.* ſpeaking to Mr. *Child* concerning Redemption and Forgiveneſs thro' Faith in the precious Bloud of Chriſt, and exhorting him to truſt to it.

Mr. *Child* anſwered, Oh I cannot reach it, I cannot come at it. ——Again (with a deep ſigh) ſaid, The black Token of Reprobation are upon me.

M. You are obliged to ſtoop to the Soveraignty of God.

Mr. *Child.* Oh I cannot, I would be above him. Oh that there ſhould be an eternal bleſſed Being, and I ſure never to enjoy him! That there ſhould be an eternal Wrath and Puniſhment, and I ſure to fall, to fall under it!——I ſhall be an eternal Monument of the Wrath of God!

The Effect of a Conference had with Mr. John Child, *by* T. P. *between whom there had been for divers years more than a common Intimacy and Converſation.*

MR. *Child* ſignified by a Friend, he had a great deſire to ſpeak with *T. P.* and ſent a ſhort Letter to him to that purpoſe, concluding it thus: [*It may be of advantage to the wretched Soul of him who was formerly known to you by the name of* John Child.]

T. P. gave him a meeting, and found him in a very dejected and deſpairing frame, full of horror and confuſion, crying out, (as ſoon as his Tears would give him leave) that his condition was exceeding bad; that he was a miſerable wretch; that he had ſinned at an extraordinary rate; that there was no mercy for him; he had been guilty of thoſe things ſpoken of *Pſal.* 50. 19, 20. and that the 22th verſe was a dreadful word to him; for as God had there threatned, ſo he would do to him, even tear him in pieces.

T. P. God there calls upon men who had forgotten him, to conſider in order to Repentance.

Mr. *Child.* Yea, ſo it was, and that ſometime gave me a little hope; but it was quickly over. (And riſing up and walking, ſmote his breaſt, ſaying,) Sir, I am damned, I am damned; it is moſt certainly ſo! my day is over. Oh that it were with me as in days paſt! but it is too late: The Decree is gone forth, it is ſealed in Heaven, and it is irreverſible: Jeſus cannot now ſave me; he will not, he cannot mediate for me, I have ſo much offended him, in maliciouſly abuſing his People.—Oh what a Wretch was I! what a Spirit was I led by!

T. P.

T. P. Remember the goodneſs of God to Mankind.

Mr. *Child.* That is a truth ſtill, that is a truth ſtill, but I cannot lay hold on it: and by how much the more I have believed and aſſerted it, ſo much the greater is my Sin and the aggravation of my Condemnation.

T. P. Remember what the Prophet ſpeaks, *Jer.* 3. 5, 12, 13. *Will he reſerve his anger for ever— Behold, thou haſt ſpoken and done evil things as thou could'ſt, Go and proclaim theſe words— Return thou backſliding Iſrael— I am merciful, ſaith the Lord, I will not keep anger for ever, only acknowledge thine iniquity—*

T. P. Knowing his former temper of Spirit, told him, he feared his Pride and Ambition had prompted him to do and publiſh ſuch things, whereof he now felt the unſupportable ſmart.

Mr. *Child.* This is true, Pride and Covetouſneſs hath ruined me, it hath undone me, I have been too much influenced thereby; I have been an Hypocrite; I am ſo now; I ſeem to repent; I do not, I cannot repent.

T. P. I adviſe you to take care of your health, and conſult with ſome able Phyſician, leſt this diſtreſs and horror of mind bring you under ſuch Diſtempers as may render you more uncapable of receiving that advice and comfort that may be offered to you from the Word of God.

Mr. *Child* walking to the end of the Room, turned back with a very ſtern countenance, and ſtriking his hand on his breaſt, ſaid, No, Sir, I cannot pamper this Body, for God will have it made a remarkable Example to this Generation.

T. P. I adviſe you to frequent hearing the Word of God.

Mr. *Child.* I have no inclination to it.

T. P. Offered that ſome ſhould come and improve ſome hours in Prayer to God for him; but to this Mr. *Child* gave no anſwer.

This is the ſubſtance of what paſſed betwixt us about the beginning of *Auguſt.* And ſoon after, going a Journey, I ſaw him no more.

Many other Paſſages, to the like effect, were uttered from Mr. *Child*, with which his countenance, geſtures, and whole behaviour, bore ſuch a proportion, as were ſufficient to evidence to all perſons of underſtanding and ſobriety, who had formerly known him, and then heard and beheld him, that he apprehended the Arrows of the Almighty to ſtick faſt in him, and that the troubles, darkneſs, confuſions, horrors and affrightments of his Soul, were not leſs, if they were not much more, than his Tongue expreſt. In the dread

and

and fear of the righteous Judgments of him who is the ſearcher of all hearts, whom this Man had ſo highly offended, in ſinning againſt the light and checks of his Conſcience, I ſuffer not my thoughts to run out concerning his Eternal Eſtate. His remorſe of Conſcience, ſelf-condemnation, frequent asking forgiveneſs of his offended Brethren, begging the Prayers of others, and attempts to pray himſelf, ſeemed to ſavour of that which himſelf would not allow to be called repentance, perhaps becauſe his publick recantation of the injuries done to his Brethren (which he acknowledged to be juſt, but by reaſon of ſhame, and thereby expoſing himſelf to ſufferings and loſſes, he could not bring his heart throughly to conſent to it) were by ſome made the terms of it. And however it pleaſeth God, in his long-ſuffering, to permit, without an open rebuke, ſuch as make it a trade, for gain ſake, without any diſtinction of perſons, as ignorantly as maliciouſly to brand and calumniate a whole Society, with the high Crimes committed by ſome few that bear their Name, to the ſcandal and grief of all their Brethren, yet our God is a terrible God, that accepteth no man's perſon, nor taketh rewards, but is known by the Judgments he executeth; and in this Perſon we have a dreadful Inſtance of his High Diſpleaſure againſt ſuch, who by their Converſation amongſt their Brethren, know how to diſtinguiſh between the guilty and the innocent, and yet will dare preſumptuouſly, for private and ſelfiſh ends, hypocritically, and againſt the dictates of their own Knowledge and Conſcience, maliciouſly to accuſe a whole Party, as guilty of ſuch things, whereof he knows, (if there be any) it is but here and there one among thouſands, that have ever adminiſtred any occaſion for ſuch an accuſation: which may be a warning to us all how we offend in the like kind.

Mr. John

Mr. John Child's *Aſperſions in his printed Plea of the Nonconformiſts for the Conformiſts, to which, as we ſuppoſe, his Paper, written with his own Hand, tranſcribed in the other Colume, refers.*

Page 5. THE Nonconformiſt have no Order at all, eſpecially the generality of Mechanical Preachers in that Way; for either they leave their Callings, and Concerns of their Families, and run up and down Preaching of their own Heads, upon a phanſical ſuppoſition, that they are able to Preach; or elſe, at moſt, have but the conſent and connivance of a few weak perſons, like themſelves, who are altogether incompitent Judges in ſuch a weighty Caſe. The Caſe being truly thus, as we are able to make it good.

Pag. 6. I durſt undertake, upon a ſober debate, to make good, that that looſe kind of way, made uſe of by them, is above meaſure more intolerable and inconvenient than that of the Church of *England.*

Mr. Child's *Recantation in his Paper, written with his own Hand.*

That it is a diſhonour to the Church and Clergy of England, *to have ſuch an one, that hath no more Wit, ſo little Juſtice, Reaſon and Conſcience, plead for them; that the Author of this Libel is worthily ſo repreſented, appears by divers baſe, falſe, deviliſh and moſt ſcandalous Paſſages therein contained.*

THey are repreſented as a People weak and phanatical, and not rendring a tolerable Reaſon for their differing from others, which is a deviliſh ſtroke made by a back blow; to aſſert the Nonconformiſt have no kind of Order in ſending forth their Miniſters; that Preachers run on their own heads, upon a phanſiful ſuppoſition, that they are able to Preach, or, at moſt, have but the conſent and connivance of a few weak perſons, is a Deviliſh Lye, as thouſands can witneſs; to ſay, it is a true ſtate, or the Caſe being truly thus, as we are able to make it good, Is a Lye, if poſſible, more than damnable.

To ſuggeſt again, that he is able to make good a looſe kind of way amongſt them, more intolerable than thoſe they deſcent from, is a wicked and baſe reflection, and indeed a downright lie.

Pag. 7.

Pag. 7. To hear ſome Miniſters of the Church of *England*, is not to the diſhonour of God, diſcommodious to the Souls of Men here, nor hazardous of their Salvation hereafter.

Once to ſuppoſe, that the Nonconformiſts in general do hold, is a diſhonour to God, diſcommodious to the Souls of Men here, and hazardous of their Salvation hereafter, to hear good Miniſters of the Church of *England*, is moſt weak and deviliſh.

Page 11. How ſhall we believe our Nonconformiſts have ſuch a reverence for thoſe good men that are dead— when they diſdain and reject thoſe now alive that are under the ſame circumſtances.

To declare, that the Nonconformiſts do diſdain and reject the good Miniſters of the Church of *England*, now alive, is a vile ſlander unjuſtly caſt upon them.

Pag. 14. We do ſay, though the Nonconformiſts may be honeſt and well-meaning People, yet, for the moſt part of them, they are far below ſome Miniſters afore-mentioned, both for Learning, Parts, Prudence, Policy, yea, and Piety too.

To ſay, though they are well-meaning People, yet they are far below ſome Miniſters of the Church of *England*, is monſtrous fooliſh, for ſo are the moſt part of the People of the Conformiſts below ſome Miniſters of the Nonconformiſts, for Learning, Parts, Prudence, and Policy too. At what a learned rate doth this wicked Scribler argue.

Pag. 17. To ſay, there is greater Learning amongſt them than the generality of others.

To ſay, there is greater Learning with the Church-Miniſters, than with others, is a baſe and unworthy Compariſon; it being well known, there are learned and worthy Men amongſt the Nonconformiſts, as moſt are in the World.

Pag. 18. Take two or three Mechanicks in a Town, and put to theſe ſo many Prieſts and Jeſuits to diſpute, and what fearful bafling work will they make with theſe poor Mechanicks or Lay-Preachers.

To put Lay-Preachers to diſpute with Prieſts and Jeſuits, when there are Men learned and able to match them beſides theſe, and then to ſuppoſe the victory on the Papiſt-ſide, is baſe and diſingenious.

Pag. 19.

Pag. 19. 1. For their Institution and Ordination, they have, 1. Persons of ripe Age, great Learning, and much Experience, to come before, who have Power and Parts to examine and try their fitness. 2. They have afterwards Congregations to preach before, for the approbation or dislike; and if they shall be found fit to pass an induction, then there is a comfortable support and maintenance for them, to incourage and carry them on in their Work. Now of this useful Order, there is in a manner a total vacancy amongst the Nonconformists — No Maintenance for them, in case found fit — The Poor better provided for under the Ministers of the *Church of England*, than elsewhere.

To condemn the Party, for shortness in a few, in respect of the Ministers and the Poor, is horrible Injustice; To say, there is a total vacancy of any useful Order amongst the Nonconformists, in respect of Proof, Tryal, Ordination, and Maintenance, is so grand a Lye, that the Devil himself cannot have confidence enough to aver it.

Pag. 20. The Nonconformists in their carriage, are very surly and dogged, sour and morose.

To say, they are in their common carriage, surly, dogged, sour, and morose, is so grand a lye, that thousands and ten thousands can attest against it.

Pag. 21. The Doctrine of many Nonconformists hath been to set out God to be a vehement, rigid and severe Being, ready to take advantage, nay, to make them, rather than fail, instancing the *Epist.* of *Jude*, that some are made to be taken and destroyed, and that *Esau*, with the generality of others, were hated by him that made them, without respect to any cause on their parts, intimating the unmercifulness of God to the most part of Mankind, making of them with a design to damn them.

To charge an ill chain of Doctrines and Principles upon a Party, when not one in a thousand do hold the same, is a kind of Justice and Charity that comes from Hell.

Pag. 22. And that becauſe we are all as dead (whilſt we are alive) as a Stock or a Stone, or, as a Mechanick had it lately in his Pulpit, as dead as a Corps, that lyes by the Walls in a Coffin, ready for burial; That there is no neceſſity for obedience to pleaſe God, or work out our own Salvation: Nay, as one Mr. *B*--- phraſed it, not long ſince in a Pulpit, It is Deviliſh, yea, Witchcraft and Sorcery, for any to preach up doing for the obtaining Life and Salvation; and that love to God himſelf is not neceſſary to a man's being ſaved.

When one man ſhall preach a groundleſs Notion or Doctrine, and a Party ſhall be abuſed for it, it is very hardly leſs than damnable; many thouſands do hold noble Principles that have not affinity with a wronging God, Man, or the Goſpel.

Pag. 24. I do profeſs, ſince I have allowed my ſelf a little liberty to hear the Miniſters aforeſaid, I have been greatly aſhamed to think how ill I have ſpent my time, to ſit under the preaching of pitious weak Souls of the other ſide, and am not at all pleaſed to ſee well-meaning People expoſe themſelves for ſuffering for ſo ill a Work.

To ſpend time in ſitting under pitious weak Souls, is better than to ſpend it in damnable lyes and ſlanders againſt good men.

Pag. 25. For by this means they may come to ſee by an eaſie rule of compariſon, the weakneſs and inſufficiency of thoſe that they formerly adhered to and admired, together with the great worth and value, that is in the other, whom they before ſo ſlighted, and eſteemed as the Sons of *Beelzebub*, the Merchants of *Babilon*, or, at beſt, but the broken Army of *Magog*; the ſight and underſtanding of which (I

To ſet forth the Nonconformiſt ſetting light by Church-Miniſters, eſteeming of them Sons of *Beelzebub*, Merchants of *Babilon*, or broken Armies of *Magog*, is highly deviliſh, full of poiſon, and calls for great damnation; to affirm, that the generality of the Nonconformiſt-Preachers, are weak, ſhallow, illiterate and inconſiderate Men, is a damnable lye, for they are generally ſober and thinking men;

(I doubt not) be an effectual means to cure them of that diſtemper, which, for the extravagancy of it, may be called a Vertigo or Calenture.

Pag. 26. If the Nation ſhould be influenced by ſuch men (as the flocking to them, and leaving the other tends thereunto) then down goes our Schools of Learning, the famous Univerſities, and not only ſo, but down goes our Churches and Publick Meeting-places, which are the beſt conveniences for ſolemnizing of Gods Publick Worſhip. As I knew a *mechanic Brother* once, that wiſhed, that all the Pariſh-Churches in *England* were of one intire body, and that he was able with a Cable to draw them into the Sea, he would do it, thô he periſhed with them. And this not all neither, but down goes the Miniſters Maintenance--- I might inlarge here, but I ſpare the weak. 1. They deny Learning. 2. They trample Tradition. 3. Reaſon itſelf; this noble and renowned Soul falls under the ſame misfortune, with its good old Friend and Neighbour, Tradition. Oh! what Clamours have we raiſed againſt it, calling of it carnal Reaſon, corrupted Reaſon, blind Guide, and what not, and blows ſtruck ready to break the Pulpit, that they may thump it down ſufficiently.

men; to call them Brethren, with ſuch blaſting and poiſonous breath, is the Serpent, and worſe than a Dog.

To bring in one perſon that might be mad and miſlead, an Enemy to Pariſh-Churches and deſire their downfal, and to lodge this at the doors of the Party, It makes the Author a grand Devil. That paſſage [I might enlarge here, but I ſpare the weak] ſavours of contempt and helliſh pride; to ſay, that they deny Learning, trample upon Tradition, and beat down Reaſon, is ſo grand a lye, that the Author can never ſtand under it, when God comes to judge for it.

Pag. 28. They tolerate men uncapable of the former, and very defective in the latter, ſuch whoſe learning never made them capable of reading with a diſtinct and proper pronunciation.

They ſlight, undervalue, and reject men of the beſt parts and learning in the Land, as might be made appear, not only by the ſurly carriages they ſhew towards them, but by ſhunning their company, and at all times refuſing to hear them.

That they tolerate Men uncapable of Tradition, and defective in Reaſon, ſlight and reject men of the beſt parts and learning in the Land, and ſhew it by ſuch carriages, and ſhunning their company at all times, refuſing to hear them.

This is ſo notorious and foul a ſlander, that declares the Author to be a blind and beſotted Devil.

—To set aside more private disorders, we have them that are open to the sight of the Sun; *viz.* forty distinct Sects, some say twenty at least.—

To number up the Sects to twenty or forty, carries a secret malice in it, that must be accounted for.

Pag. 29, 30. That such do most abound and we are most certain to have them in the Ministry of the *Church of England*; for the clearing of this, the experience of many years tells us, that out of the Ministry of the *Church of England*, we have had Men fit to Preach before great and mighty Princes, the high Courts of Parliament, the grave and reverend Judges of the Realm, the Magistrates and Courts of Aldermen in great Cities and Corporations; yea, their Learning and Education hath been such, as hath rendred them fit to be Counsellors of State, to give Advice to Princes, to go Ambassadors upon grand Messages (for their Countrey's good) into Foreign Parts: But where have any arose out of the Mechanic Preachers of the Nonconformists? And is not this for the honour of a Nation, where Science shall so flourish) that a sort or rank of men, which commonly is below the Gentry, in point of descent, should, by Learning and good Education, become able to deliver God's Message to their Princes and Rulers, and their Princes Ambassages to Foreign States; and would not all this be lost, if the Nation should be suffered to lose its Learning, and to be immersed into dull and clownish Illiteracy?

It is suggested, as if the learning of the Nation, and mens being made useful thereby, was in danger of being lost, if the Noncons should prosper; That many Preachers leave their Callings and Families, under pretence of being called to preach, that understand not their *A, B, C*, can hardly speak common Sence, that often preach Nonsence, Confusion, and sometimes Blasphemy, that have not an habit of Knowledge, nor Books, nor allow themselves time to study.

There will be a freedom from a needless charge, in contributing to the maintenance of weak and silly Men, who carelesly leave either their civil Callings, (and expose their Families to ruin and decay, and to depend upon others to be provided for) under a pretence of being called to Preach, when God knows they do not understand their *A, B, C*, in Religion, can hardly speak common sence, and are so far from being able to convince critical Gainsayers, as that they know not how to teach the Ignorant, or to form one right intelligible Notion of Points fundamental, nay, such they are, as often preach Nonsence, Confusion, and sometimes Blasphemy.

A fur-

A further Account of the ſad State of Mr. John Child, *as it was written with his own Hand, being found in his houſe after his death, and delivered by his Wife to Mr.* H.C. *take as followeth.*

Pride, Folly, Madneſs, Villany, and great wickedneſs retracted.

THat Satan may fill the hearts of men as to make them forget God, grieve his good Spirit, ſin againſt Chriſt, offer horrible violence to the light of Grace, the ſacred Law of their Maker, and the rational powers of their own Souls, as well as cauſe grief and piercing ſorrow to the hearts of their dear Brethren, is not only verified and confirmed by variety of bad Examples, and inſtances both from Scripture and Hiſtory, but hath alſo appeared notorious and evident in a late unparallel'd inſtance of one who hath been a Profeſſor of the Chriſtian Religion, and that after the moſt ſtricteſt manner of theſe latter times for many years, *viz.* The Author of the *Second Argument*; who forgetting God, and the great Obligation he ſtood in to Him and to all Mankind, eſpecially the good and beſt part thereof, did ſuffer himſelf ſo far to be acted by a diabolical influence, and the miniſtry of Darkneſs, as not only to deſert thoſe perſons which he did believe and knew to be God's Jewels, (choice and good) but with a hard heart, and bold, impudent, and ſteeled forehead, a moſt poyſonous breath, and viperous tongue, did ſet forth, to the great diſhonour of God, and the unſpeakable grief of multitudes of good and pious Souls, a prophane and ſcandalous Libel, under pretence of perſwading to Peace and Unity; whereas the chiefeſt deſign of it was to advance his Pride, to vent his Spite, and maliciouſly to ſpit forth the very Fire of Hell againſt ſome, yea againſt many that he had taken offence at: which with ſhame and great confuſion he deſires to confeſs both to God and Man, and eſpecially to ſuch as knew him, and were ſorely grieved and offended by him.

1. He confeſſes his great pride, fooliſhneſs, and preſumption, in daring ſo much as to offer at a Method to Unite ſuch different Parties, with whoſe Wiſdom, Parts, and Learning, he had nothing

thing to compare; for which he is bowed down, and asketh pardon.

2. In giving the leaſt touch, glance, or intimation, as tho' God's Ordinance of the Holy Supper, were ſo low and indifferent a thing, as might be made uſe of to anſwer a carnal end, or ſecular deſign.

3. That he ſhould render men odious to the Nation, as being Enemies to the Miniſtry and their maintenance, and the proviſion made by Law for the poor; for this he accuſeth himſelf of being injurious, and prays for pardon.

4. That he ſhould baſely reflect upon mens Callings in a way of lightneſs and diſdain; he thinks it great madneſs and folly, and begs pardon both of God and man for it.

5. That he ſhould ſo boldly and preſumptuouſly pry into the Decrees of God, and ſo abuſively ſet forth the conſequences of mens Opinions about them, in ſuch horrid, harſh, and unſuitable Language, charging the Authors of thoſe Opinions with the higheſt ſtrain of Murder, even of God himſelf, he is unfeignedly ſorry, and begs pardon. And that he ſhould render the Body of the Nonconformiſts weak, fooliſh, and contemptible to their Enemies, he thinks were great wickedneſs, and that he ſhould call them a villanous Body of men, he confeſſeth with a bleeding heart, ſo high a ſtrain and degree of wickedneſs in it, that 'tis like blaſpheming God's Tabernacle, and them that dwell therein; for which he is ſorry a thouſand fold, and begs the pardon of God and all good men. That he ſhould give occaſion of ſtumbling to any, whereby he may be guilty of their bloud, at the thoughts of which he trembles, and begs pardon with his whole Soul. That he ſhould ſpeak againſt his Brother, and ſlander his Mothers Son, making the hearts of the Righteous ſad, that God would not have made ſad, and pain and grieve all that were acquainted with him; this he confeſſes to be a ſin of a deep dye, and his heart is ready to rend aſunder for it, and with an agony begs pardon of God and all good men. That he ſhould bring ſuch ſhame and confuſion upon himſelf, as to exclude him the comfortable ſociety of good people, and render him both afraid and aſhamed to do his duty in viſiting thoſe that are under affliction; for theſe great wickedneſſes and damnable villanies, and any other that may be contained in that deteſtible and accurſed Pamphlet aforeſaid, which for want of the ſight of, I cannot enumerate. I confeſs my ſelf a monſtrous Wretch, a great Tranſgreſſor, an horrible Actor of wickedneſs,

kedneſs, a Gratifier of the wicked and worſt of men, a prime Enemy to many godly people, a Promoter of the Devil's deſigns, a great Provoker of God and his Son, an Enemy to my ſelf, a Procurer of the ruine of my Family; for which I pray that my Soul may eſcape the damnation of Hell. *Amen* and *Amen*, O God.

Another Paper written as a Poſtſcript to the former, by Mr. John Child's *own hand; a Copy whereof take as followeth.*

HAving met with the vile and accurſed Book called the *Second Argument*, and the Author being filled with horrour and aſtoniſhing confuſion, at the peruſal of it, could not well tranſcribe the firſt Paper, and put things into an orderly method; therefore thought fit to write this by way of Poſtſcript.

Firſt, He thanks God that he is not yet in Hell, lamenting his folly, wickedneſs, and violence with *Cain*, *Balaam*, and *Judas*; but has a little time to leave this Account of things, in reſpect of the firſt deſign and progreſs of the ill-contrived, infamous, reproachful, and ſcandalous Libel.

1. That the very beginning in theſe words, [it hath been our endeavour to correct, *&c.*] is deviliſhly proud and inſolent; 2d. part [a ſight of their folly in being debarred of their Civil Rights, for groundleſs Scrupuloſities in Religion] this is bold, ſaucy, and uncharitable. The 2d. page, and part of the 3d. a ſilly trifling Preſumption. 4. The 4th page, the ſuggeſting any thing of an undervaluing nature, touching the Holy Sacrament being a civil thing, of a dangerous tendancy. Declaring in page 9. [the greateſt number of Nonconformiſts to hold Principles dangerouſly Heretical, and abominably abuſive of the bleſſed God.] This he confeſſeth not only to be a raſh, injurious, and uncharitable, but a deviliſh, ſpiteful, and malicious Slander; to be not only hard Meaſure, but helliſh Cruelty and Injuſtice; to ſtretch the conſequences of mens Principles, beyond the ſence of their minds, and then charge wickedneſs upon them is againſt Juſtice, Mercy, and all good Nature; to impute ſuch ill things to the main Body or greateſt number of them, that is contained in the two following pages; as it is bold and deſperate to report the matter,

matter, so it is most horrible Injustice, and malicious Envy, to fix the Crime, to declare them upon a wicked foundation to be no true Church, to pronounce them a * *Villanous Body of People*, to be bloudy Murderers of God their Maker in the attributes of his Wisdom, Holiness, and Goodness, to proclaim them Monsters, to be giddy and foolish, to want Wit and Policy, is such a venomous Language, that Hell could not exceed. Being in very deed horribly wicked, abominable, and devilish; justly deserving damnation, and for which the Author doubts he shall hardly escape. And *page* 18. to represent them Enemies to the Bishops and Clergy, Underminers of the Schools and Learning, and against the Law for the Maintenance of the Poor, was spightful, devilish, and malicious and had a tendency to stir up Rage and Persecution; for which a deep Repentance is required. To mention mens Callings in a way of lightness and contempt, to expose them to Hate and Derision, was highly base, devilish, and full of poyson. Publickly to discover Nakedness, tho' matters of fact were true, is against all good Nature, and a very great piece of prophaness. To reflect upon them as Deniers of the Faith, and worse than Infidels, not fit to be trusted with a National Church, not to be a true Church themselves, is a condemning to so high degree, and carries so much of the rank poyson and venome of the Devil, the Accuser of the Brethren, in it, that renders forgiveness of the Crime much doubted of: for all the base Reflections, Slanders, and most astonishing Accusations and Censures, I beg Pardon of all good men, and their Prayers to God, that I may obtain Pardon and Forgiveness at his Hand.

* One of the Passages he here reflects upon, is his printed *Second Argument*, expressed in these words, *pag.* 11.

Now if a sound and true Notion of God be the first and foundation-Principle of Religion, and consequently of a true Church, then such as have it not, but the manifest and direct contrary, can be no true Church, because upon a wicked and false foundation. Such I am sure there are among the Sectaries: and if such a Villanous Body of People is the best and true Church, that even in their first and main Principle thus bloudily murder their Maker in his most admirable Attributes of Wisdom, Holiness, and Goodness; I do wonder in my mind what kind of People the World is.

Post-

POSTSCRIPT.

THis NARRATIVE *was prepar'd for the Preſs ſoon after the Death of Mr.* Child, *but the Severity of the Times were ſuch, that no Printer would undertake it, nor durſt the Compilers appear to own it; not that the Matter of Fact, in any reſpect, wanted of truth, or the Language harſh and reflecting on the* Church of England; *we hope we may, without vanity, ſay, that it's written with a Temper ſutable to the Profeſſion we have always made of Love and Charity to thoſe that differ from us, and though the face of Affairs in this Nation be ſince changed, through the Goodneß of God, and the gracious Favour of his Majeſty towards us, we purpoſe in all our Actings, to ſhew the ſame Spirit and Temper towards all Chriſtians, of what Perſwaſion ſoever, and we would by no means have this Conſtruction paß upon the Publication of this* Narrative *at this time, as if we deſign'd to make the* Church of England *odious, by refreſhing the Memory of ſo dreadful an Accident, which was the natural effect of ſome of their Perſecutions: God is our Witneß, our naked Deſign being only to Arraign the Practice of Perſecution it ſelf, without reflecting on any who have been the Inſtruments, hoping Time, and this Glorious Deſign of his Majeſty's, will have ſuch an happy iſſue, as to put all that profeß to be the Followers of Chriſt, into ſuch a condition, as to ſee it is their Intereſt, as well as their Duty, not to Contend for Perſecution, and if our Paſſions be cool'd, by wanting Power to do Miſchief, the thing its ſelf,* viz. *the Doctrine of Perſecution, may be ſafer diſcuſs'd in the lawfulneß of it.*

We had a Deſign to have Publiſh'd ſomething in this Poſtſcript, *tending to a Hearty Union and Love among all Chriſtians, which is alſo intimated in the beginning of the* Narrative, *but the preſent Temper of ſome Mens Zeal, which ſets their Paſſions on fire, will render a Diſcourſe of this Nature, of little uſe, they contending to preſerve the Inſtruments of our Ruine, and we the removal of them;*

and we believe all thinking Men will agree with us, that we have ground for this Apprehenſion : All we ſhall ſay to it, at preſent, is, that we hope our Actions ſhall conſtantly witneſs to the truth of this, that we deſign nothing, but to be in a capacity of living quietly by our Neighbours, and ſhewing how much we love and value thoſe that differ from us, by forgetting Injuries, and ſtriving who ſhall ſhew moſt of the Spirit of the bleſſed Jeſus, which conſiſts in Meekneſs, Forgiveneſs, and Forbearance.

That which we ſhall add, with reſpect to the Narrative *its ſelf, is this, That it's a true and dreadful Inſtance of a Man ſcar'd into Conformity, by the Severity he ſaw on others, and in part felt himſelf; that the Temptation met with his Corruptions, (which, if his own charge on himſelf be not too ſevere) you ſee verified by his own Papers; yet this excuſeth not the Doctrine and Practice of Perſecution; if ſo Satan might waſh his hands alſo of the Sins of Men, and though ſome Men may know the beginnings of Sins, yet none knows the bounds of it: ſo, after his Conformity, he drew his Pen, and dipt it in Gall againſt his Brethren, going on to do violence to his Conſcience, till God in a dreadful manner awaken'd it againſt himſelf, ſo as prov'd terrible to all the beholders, as well as to himſelf, the Particulars whereof ſhall not be repeated; we account it a loud Voice againſt Perſecution, and durſt not ſilence it, leſt we ſhould betray this Witneſs of God againſt it; we know Authorities of Scripture and Reaſon are beſt to work upon the Judgment, to convince the World of the error, of doing that to others, that would not they ſhould do to them: but a Fact of this Nature may move the Affections, and corroborate that Light that Men receive from thence; and for this end it was at firſt intended to be publiſhed. It's a dreadful thing, not only to break in upon the Civil Rights of Men, on account of Religion, but far more to be Inſtruments, to put any upon ſuch ways, which not only endanger their Peace of Conſcience here, but their Eternal Welfare hereafter; and this Evil we are bold to charge Perſecution with, and have evidence enough for it in this very Inſtance.*

The Diſcourſe of the Nature and Office of Conſcience, *that you find in the beginning of the* Narrative, *was written by a worthy Brother of ours, for Private Satisfaction, which we have preſumed to publiſh, we humbly conceiving it to be for Publick Good.*

The Concluſions that we think are natural from the foregoing Narrative, *is :*

Firſt,

First, *That all Men be exceeding careful of bidding Defiances to their Conſciences; out of it may come a ſtrong Wind, that rends the Rocks: however ſome Men may not taſte that ſeverity this Man did, but go to the Grave with their Bones full of Marrow, yet it's certainly the Duty and Intereſt of every Man, to take diligent heed to keep a Conſcience void of offence towards God and Man, that they may eſcape that Shipwrack that this Man, and other Inſtances of the World, of the like nature, have met with. God ſometimes makes ſome Men Pillers of Salt, that the ſecure World may be awakened, and that Atheiſts and Prophane Perſons may tremble at the living Inſtances of the Sovereignty of the Divine Majeſty, in and over the Conſciences of Men, which they would outbrave or deny the Almighty God can create a Hell on this ſide Hell in the Conſciences of Men, the Fire of which, neither the Artifice of Men, nor Time, not the Application of the Promiſes of the Goſpel, (though the fitteſt* Mediums) *can extinguiſh. An Inſtance of this you have in what the Friends of this Man did, who with great tenderneſs endeavour'd to do all they could in this kind, but without ſucceſs, and, as is apparent in the precedent* Narrative, *they had not the humors of a Man under Natural Melancholy to deal with, but a Man purely under the dreadful Terrors of a guilty and an enrag'd Conſcience; a Man of ſo ſound and ſtrong a Conſtitution of Body, that all that knew him, even to the laſt, could and did eaſily diſcern his Diſeaſe was purely Spiritual.*

Secondly, *We conceive, at this time of day at leaſt, it may put our Country-men, who have hitherto been of a contrary Opinion, to a ſerious thought, whether that Practice be of God, that is attended with ſuch dreadful Inſtances of this Nature, and we the rather conceive this* Narrative *uſeful at this time, becauſe the Eye of the whole Nation are upon, and their Thoughts are at work about theſe Inſtruments, we mean, the* Penal Laws, *which have made ſuch havock on the Liberties, Perſons, and Eſtates of Men, and on the Conſciences of many others, who yet, by the goodneſs of God, have not felt the Dreadful Effects this Man did, and we pray God they never may.*

And above all, ſince his Gracious Majeſty, by the goodneſs of God, hath publiſhed His Royal Declaration, for Liberty of Conſcience, *and upon ſuch Grounds and Reaſons, as we conceive are unanſwerable, outdoing all Kings and Princes, not only in the Fact of his Clemency, but in the Reaſon of it: and as it is that that will be to his immortal Honour, ſo we hope, that it will have that Perfection by Law, that may for ever deliver this Nation from the Convulſions and Evils it has labour'd under in former*

Years, and render us so happy, as not any more so much as to dispute whether Persecution be agreeable to the Divine Law.

We confess we most willingly fall in with his Majesty's gracious Designs, and shall, to our utmost, endeavour to carry them on, not knowing a greater Service we can be capable of, rendring to God, to our Prince, our Country, or Religion; we certainly believe, that if once we were on even ground with our Fellow-Subjects, it will be easie to let them see the goodness and benefits of Liberty of Conscience, *and how just it is, that Religion should be left to him who is the Object of it, to correct the Errors of Men about it, and we have not only the Authority of Scriptures, and right Reason, but also Suffrage of his gracious Majesty to this Assertion.*

We conclude, humbly imploring the Divine Blessing on the Person and Councels of the King, by whom we sit under our Vine and Fig-tree, and pray he may live to see the Top-stone of this glorious Fabrick of Liberty of Conscience *laid, and that He and his People may long live to enjoy the Blessings of it, and that Piety to God, and that Charity to Men, which we believe are natural Fruits of this Liberty, may flourish in this Kingdom.*

FINIS.

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